Encounter

edited by Stephen Spender
& Melvin J Lasky

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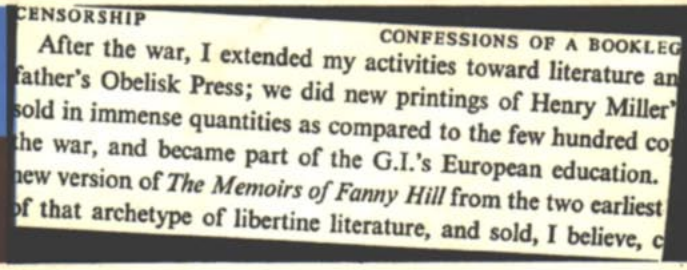
October 1965

Journey to the American South
John Wain

Marx's Religious Drama
Louis J Halle

Pornography and Privacy
George Steiner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Encounter

Edited by STEPHEN SPENDER *and* MELVIN J. LASKY

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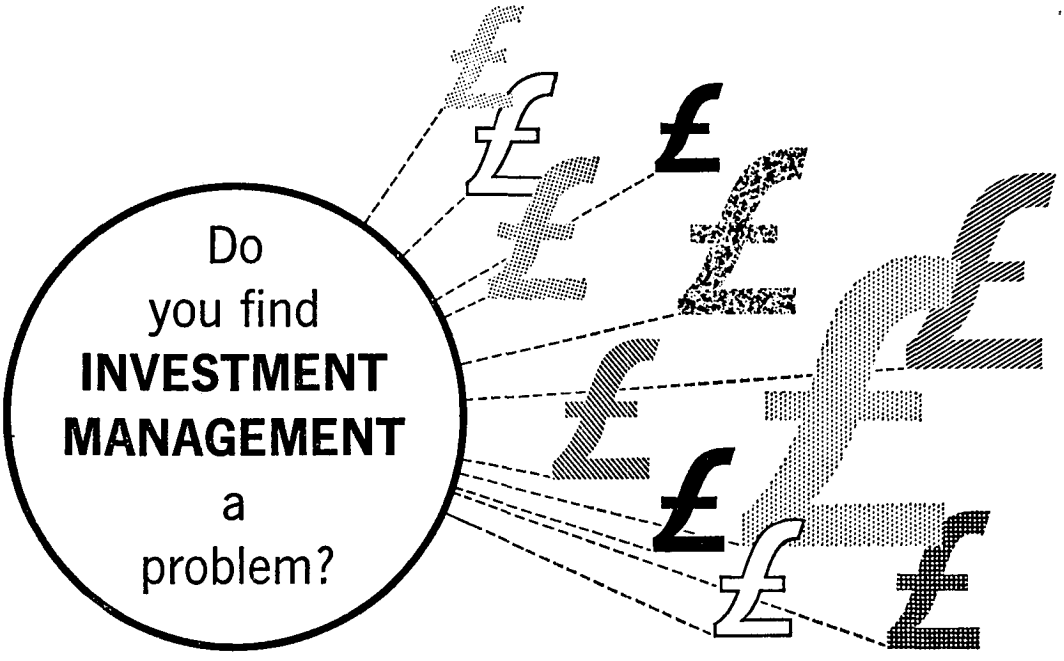

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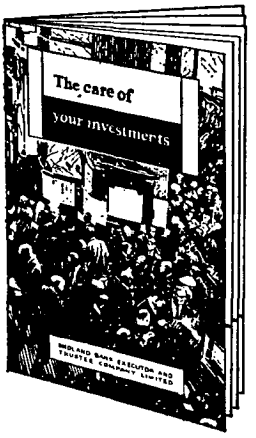

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John Wain

Dixieland Ramble

Journey to the American South

"IF THE SUN breed maggots in a dead dog, being a good kissing carrion...." The sun breeds many things, but chiefly, and endlessly, violence. I don't know why. Perhaps, under overcast skies, life develops more slowly and with less confidence, so that it seems natural to conserve what has been so hardly won. The sun draws out life prodigally, draws it out from any ashy soil where a few drops of rain may chance to fall, from any hidden swamp or stinking ditch—and then beats it back into the ground with an equal carelessness. So that people who live in hot countries have a perpetual, half-conscious love affair with death. (Only the Spaniards and Mexicans have made it fully conscious, and the results are not pretty to look at.)

The Mississippi river, for great stretches, flows between solid walls of green, like one's idea of the Nile or the Amazon. The first settlers, on pushing into this country, must have found it one dense forest. No, not a forest, a jungle: and in these hundreds of years they have not yet cleared the whole of it. It is still there, waiting to take over. The fields and plantations are, in effect, clearings, each one bounded by that same solid wall of green. Behind that wall, one can imagine the intense green silence, the sharp cries of birds, the soft ripple as an alligator slides into the creek.

Everyone who has written about the South, from Mark Twain onward, has perceived that the main character in the story is the landscape —not the men, not the institutions, but the country itself, so gigantic, so contemptuous of us, and finally, in spite of our restless gadgetry, so unchangeable. This is, of course, very largely true of every part of America. The European failure to understand the American mind stems mainly from the fact that, in Europe, the natural world has been thoroughly subjugated and is therefore treated, as Aldous Huxley remarked, with the generosity that is due to a beaten enemy. Whereas, in America, nature is still hostile to man, ready at any moment to shove him aside and take over. The war between man and nature is still, on this continent, a shooting war. She savages him with droughts and earthquakes, knocks his towns flat with tornadoes and washes them away with floods, and he retaliates by flouting and insulting her at every opportunity. Europeans get malicious fun out of the American's desire to put himself at the furthest possible remove from nature—to surround himself with machines, to sweat in steam-heating so brutal that he must gulp iced drinks every few minutes in a vain attempt to keep his body temperature down, to process his food until it no longer resembles food at all. But these absurdities spring from a root that is sombre, indeed tragic. What man cannot do for himself, here, nature will never do for him. The American Indian made a successful peace-treaty with this hostile nature by submitting, having no ambitions, accepting his role as the subordinate partner. To live in tents and to follow the buffalo—this much is permissible! But the white American, coming from Europe and bringing with him the European idea that nature must be domesticated, has fought that war for four centuries and is still not winning. Nature has the better of him. She it is who dictates his gadget-tinkering, pill-swallowing life, his fretful rhythms which are always in conflict with her steady ones, his constant demand for action that will *alter* something.

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But the black American? He who was brought here manacled, in a slave ship, forced into a new life as a baby is forced from its mother's womb, with a bill of sale as his certificate of baptism? Who knows what his life is? Since he was brought here as a slave, and since a slave is by definition an invisible human being, what incredible reorganisation will be needed to make him visible at last?

The worst thing, of course, is the tragic sense of human waste. *Pace* the racists and fundamentalists, with their talk of the Sons of Ham, there is not a scrap of evidence that black people are any less finely organised than white, and one or other of the wretched shacks one sees by the roadside might have seen the birth of a Negro Shakespeare or Michelangelo. What possible fate could have awaited him? The surge of his genius would have been blocked in every direction until finally he would have run mad, this Negro Shakespeare, and the power boiling in his blood-cells, that power which should have been giving the world another *Hamlet*, would have led him to some blindly despairing act of rape or murder. And after that, we know in what manner he died.

There is no need to speculate; we know for a fact how a gifted man feels under slavery. Frederick Douglass, the Maryland slave who escaped and lived to have one of those remarkable 19th-century careers, culminating in his appointment as U.S. Marshal for the District of Columbia, was not a Shakespeare, but he was a man of fire and sensibility—say, one-tenth of a Shakespeare—and his moving autobiography, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass,* describes very exactly the sense of mounting, inescapable pressure which finally hurls the slave into some suicidal act.

> I often found myself regretting my own existence, and wishing myself dead; and but for the hope of being free, I have no doubt but that I should have killed myself, *or done something for which I should have been killed.*

Italics, as they say, mine.

THERE IS AN EXCELLENT TRAIN, the Humming-bird, which goes straight down from Chicago to New Orleans. But even if the only trains were bad ones, I would still choose this way of travel. The railroad has been so central to the life of the South, and in particular to the life of the Negro. Too poor to travel any other way, often desperate to escape from his fate, the Southern Negro pinned so many of his longings and hopes on the slow-moving freight train that could, with luck, be hopped. His songs are full of allusions to it:

> *I said, brakeman,*
> *Won't you let me ride this train?*
> *He said, lady,*
> *You know this train ain't mine.*

Or:

> *You take the T. and P.,*
> *I'll take the L. and N.:*
> *We've got to be lucky, honey,*
> *To ever meet again.*

Or, more buoyantly,

> *So give everybody my regards:*
> *I'm comin' if I have to ride the rods.*

To "ride the rods" means to cling to the understructure of a railway carriage like a demented insect, exposed to a hell of noise and dust. It takes courage to be buoyant about necessities like these, to bring them into one's more lighthearted songs. But then even to live as a Negro in America, even to breathe in and out, has always taken courage.

The railway makes a shining steel path through a landscape that grows more and more bewildering and beautiful. Leaving Cincinnati in the evening, the train is bathed in a sunset that seems to be filtered through a screen of pearls. Here, at last, are the sweet showers of April: we head Southward across meadows, through forests, catching glimpses of lush, forgotten valleys, broad rivers, everything that makes a landscape lyrical. Before setting out on this Southern journey, I spent a few days in Chicago, my purpose being to take a long, slow look at the living conditions of the Negro who had successfully got away and settled in the freedom-loving North: Chicago, with its demand for a huge labour force, has always been the place where a Southern Negro, if he could drag himself that far, could expect to find work. What I saw—on, for instance, a journey round the old elevated railway, the "Loop"—was terrifying. Each street was narrower and more dingy, each wooden house shabbier and flimsier, than the last. I read at the same time a magazine article in which a journalist declared that most of Chicago's 930,000 Negroes, about 20 per cent of the population, have no "meaningful contact" with whites. In other words, the Negro leaves his ghetto in the morning, goes back to it at night, and in between meets white men only as employers and overseers. This thought

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might be quite supportable under some circumstances: but not when you are looking out of the windows of the Chicago Loop. In some valley of the Appalachians, or in the fragrant green wilderness of Kentucky or Louisiana—isn't that a different thing again? To be poor there, even to be in danger of one's life from time to time, might still be worth it, as compared with the Loop district? I don't know, and I can't imagine it from the security of my comfortable seat on the train. I am one of the lucky ones: the choices that face me are so much more sedate: to be mildly uncomfortable, mildly frustrated, in one way or another. I feel ashamed of this whenever I try to imagine an extreme situation: yet how can I change it? Comfortable men of letters who try to act apocalyptic roles, who dramatise themselves in extreme situations, are play-acting fools.

I go into the restaurant car and sit at a table which already has one occupant, a Negro. This is my first meal on the Southbound train, and I am not to know that this man is the one and only Negro I shall see in a restaurant car. He is drinking a glass of beer; it turns out later that he hasn't the price of anything to eat. We begin to talk. He is from Birmingham, Alabama. Naturally he wants to know where I am from, but when I tell him "England," the idea is too exotic to sink in at first. "New England?" he queries. "No, England." He thinks this over, then looks up in real surprise. "*England?* The mother of this country?" I convince him that this is really so, and he gives me a huge smile and grasps my hand. "You a long way from home, but you *welcome*."

This man is decently dressed, verging on middle age, a skilled artisan. Beyond that, I can get no picture of his life. His accent is so thick that I can hardly understand him (he evidently has the same feeling about my accent), and in addition he skips from one subject to another in a way that makes me wonder whether he has been drinking. (This again, however, is a characteristic he shares with many of my English friends, including highly educated ones, who show it no less markedly when they have not been drinking at all.) He keeps talking about some children he is looking after, in a coach further down the train. I can't make out whether they are his children or not. In the end, he goes off to see them and is away so long that finally, having ordered him another beer which is waiting, I go along to find him. He is indeed with two children and their mother, a well-dressed young Negro woman who seems rather ill at ease with him. Perhaps he is simply making up to the children so as to scrape acquaintance with her: a very natural thing to do. She gives me a wary smile, as if my presence added an unwelcome further complication to a situation not of her choosing. The children are falling asleep. I give the woman a respite by taking my man back to the restaurant car, where I get him to accept a hamburger as well as the beer. He invites me to his home to meet his mother, and makes sure I copy his address down. (Unfortunately it is in a town I am not able to visit.) We part friends at bedtime; I to my snug berth, he to sit up all night and continue his attentions to the tired, wary young mother. And so the train jolts through the warm spring night with its load of disparate thoughts, ideas, hopes and beliefs, like an emblem of the earth on its journey through space.

IF YOU WANT TO FEEL really depressed about the 20th century, pause for a moment to reflect on the colossal amount of slavery it has tolerated. Not "slavery" in any metaphorical sense—though I am not against these metaphors, since if the inhabitants of the Loop district in Chicago are not slaves, what are they?—but simple, old-fashioned slavery which used a human being as a chattel and kept him in captivity for the sake of the work he could be made to do. The two biggest powers on earth to-day are America and Russia, and both have used slavery quite extensively in building up their material strength. In Stalin's Russia—the documentation is there, in book after book and report after report—slave labour camps, filled with people who had been arrested on trumped-up political charges or on no charge at all, built highways and dams year after year, and quite possibly are still building them. America has never tolerated such openly cynical brutality, at least not since the emancipation of the Negro slaves, which took place at about the same time as the Russian serfs were liberated. Since that time, no American citizen has had to reckon with the possibility of being dragged off to forced labour. Unless, that is, he happened to be a Negro in the South. Convict labour was far too profitable, and far too easily available, to be overlooked by construction companies after slave labour was no longer there. There is good evidence that much of the really horrible work done in the South in the last hundred years—building railways across swamps, for in-

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stance—was done by chain-gangs of Negro convicts. And if there weren't enough genuine criminals to recruit these gangs, it was easy enough to arrest a Negro on his way home from work and convict him of vagrancy. Or to find one who had asked a white man for a dollar the white man owed him, while carrying a penknife in his pocket: that was demanding money when armed, sufficient to send him to the chain-gang for any number of years. And of course the Negro had no redress for all this. The police were white, the courts were white, the prison authorities were white. Naturally, the construction companies and their shareholders and bankers were white too. So into the chain-gangs the Negroes went.

The present-day Negro, when he contemplates this history, must often find it very difficult not to give way to rage, rage pure and simple and concentrated, rage for its own sake. And who are we, white Europeans or white Americans, to tell him not to do so, to resist and suppress that rage because of the harm it will cause? We cannot say any such thing; James Baldwin must be allowed his moments of rage, LeRoi Jones his months and years of rage, and we must simply shut up and take it. (If we are sick enough to need to be insulted, we can go to demonstrations such as the weekly "talk-out" got up in Greenwich Village by LeRoi Jones and his friends, and pay $1.25 to hear ourselves foully abused.) But, in spite of all, I do not think rage on its own will help the Negro any more than rage on its own will help the Jew, the Armenian, the Irishman, the Tibetan, the Russian, or anyone else who has been given a raw deal in our bloody century.

The Negro must certainly express his feelings, as we all must. But are those feelings really so simple that they can be simplified still further, to come out in the end merely as anger? Anger is not a real emotion; it is an escape from emotion, a way of substituting a simple feeling for an unmanageable complexity of feelings. We see this clearly as we listen to jazz, the one form of expression to which the Negro has had unrestricted access in the last fifty years, and in which his supremacy has been acknowledged. Old-style jazz, from about 1914 to 1945, had only two moods: either it was mournful and elegiac, or it was wildly exhilarated. The Negro musician, still bruised from slavery and with the consciousness of having moved hardly at all into freedom, either gave way to his feelings of poignant hopelessness or bolted from them into a let-the-good-times-roll escapism. Recent jazz, over the last fifteen years and increasingly in the last five, is distinguished from the older jazz not only by its greater musical sophistication but by the fact that this sophistication is at the service of a more complex set of feelings. A man like Wes Montgomery, for instance, produces a sound that does not really suggest either mournfulness or escapist joyfulness. What it suggests is resentful effort, like that of a man trying to free himself from a tied-up sack, and behind that an irony, and behind that an ebullience, as if he knew that the sack would soon give way and he promised himself a good time thereafter. (If this sounds fanciful, listen to his record, *Round About Midnight*.)

Wes Montgomery or Miles Davis take one a long way from Ma Rainey or Bunk Johnson. And that distance measures the extent to which the Negro has altered his identity. Since the Negro lives in a white man's country and perforce measures his identity by his position *vis-à-vis* the white man, this throws up the question, "How far has the white man changed?"

THERE IS NO ONE simple answer to this question. As with all great dilemmas in the history of a society, some people respond by rising to the heights, others by sinking to the depths. The response by college students, for instance, has been positive and whole-hearted enough to provoke the comparison with Spain in 1936. Many Civil Rights workers have risked, and some have suffered, violence and death. One thinks of William Moore, the thirty-five-year-old native of Tennessee, who in his annual holiday from his job (he was a postman) undertook to walk from Chattanooga, Tennessee, to Jackson, Mississippi, to deliver a protest note to Governor Ross Barnett. Moore's diary reveals that several people who questioned him gave their opinion that he would never reach Jackson alive. They were right: someone shot him in the forehead and neck with a rifle one night. Or of Michael Schwerner and Andrew Goodman, the two young Civil Rights workers who were murdered and whose bodies were discovered buried under a dam beside the body of the Negro James Chaney. Or of James Reeb, clubbed to death by white thugs as he came out of a Negro restaurant, with two fellow Unitarian clergymen, after the Civil Rights March from Selma to Montgomery in March of this year. Or of Violet Liuzzo, shot down on the same occasion as she ferried a Negro marcher back to Selma in her

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car. Of these people it can at least be said that they have "resigned their part In the casual comedy." Other white people have shown imagination and understanding. Of the stack of books written about this phase of the Negro's history, the one most likely to be read in a hundred years' time is John Howard Griffin's *Black Like Me*. Griffin, who had his skin darkened by medication and then wandered through the Deep South looking for jobs and acceptance generally, achieved—at the cost of great personal suffering—the break-through of experiencing the agony of the Negro without any possibility of a quick retreat to white immunity: if cornered by a hostile mob, he couldn't wipe the burnt cork off his face and say he was just kidding.

Two VIGNETTES. I am on a train, trundling through the dead wastes of Ohio in the blackness of a spring night. A thick-set young man, a standard American type with crew-cut and open, unreflective face, starts a conversation. His command of English is so limited that at first I take him for a first-generation immigrant, but after a while I realise that he is just one of those people who find language, any language, almost insurmountably difficult. He puts all verbs into the first person singular, present indicative—"this guy say, he *see* him"—and generally simplifies the language down to his own requirements. We talk, nevertheless, and he very soon brings up the question of Civil Rights, which he strongly supports. He works with a Negro, and they get along fine—in fact he would never have caught this train if his Negro work-mate had not stayed on and done overtime to let him go. (He works, it seems, at a school, perhaps as janitor.) "People say to me, 'How come you so friendly with the coloured help?' Well, I say, 'I buff their floors, they give me coffee any time I want!'" His point seems to be that a little good-will on each side will solve any problem of racial co-operation. But suddenly his face clouds over, and he seems to be struggling to find utterance for a thought of some urgency. "Only one thing," he comes out with, finally. "They don't marry." "What?" I say, not understanding him. He makes the shape of a pistol with his thumb and forefinger. "If a Nigro say he marry my sister, I *shoot* him!"

Again, I am talking to a Southern woman: pleasant, courteous, and (up to a point) cultivated. Middle-aged, she has lived all her life in the South. I happen to remark, at some stage in the conversation, that nothing in all those years has injured the American image in the world more than the Southern practice of lynching. "And we never knew anything about it!" she says, very earnestly. "It was never in the newspapers—we had absolutely no idea it was *happening*!" I make the obvious remark, that this is precisely what the German population said about the concentration camps: I say it with some reluctance, because she is a nice woman and I don't want to hurt her feelings. But she takes it, not as a criticism at all, but as an extenuation. "Yes," she says, nodding hard, "it was just like that." I fall silent, wondering what curious mental process gives rise to this reaction.

MEANWHILE, the Ku Klux Klan goes on holding giant rallies, usually in baseball stadia adorned with streamers that read GOD IS ON OUR SIDE and REMEMBER RECONSTRUCTION. This blend of religiosity with a bitter and selective historical memory makes them curiously similar to their Afrikaans counterparts. As a sympathiser with Christianity, not a believer but a well-wishing fellow-traveller, I could wish that this religion did not lend itself so easily to the purposes of racial bigotry. Still, to be fair, Martin Luther King is a Christian minister, and the record of the clergy in this civil-rights matter is an excellent one. Regarded purely as a profession, the American clergy has responded to the situation in a way that puts entirely to shame not only the business community but the other professions. Neither medicine nor law nor science have done anything more than keep their collective noses clean.

To come back to the Ku Klux Klan, the quickest way for an English person to get an idea of it is to imagine the League of Empire Loyalists or the British Union of Fascists. Mediocrity, failure, a sense of having been cheated, a fear of sliding further down—all these things bunch up into a hard knot of hate that finds relief in "direct action"—*i.e.*, violence—and in the mumbo-jumbo of oaths and ceremonial dress. Take a mob of discontented uneducated men, car-salesmen whose cars are not selling, owners of small inefficient businesses and run-down shops, offer them a brotherhood and a uniform, lots of secret oaths, and an historical cause (however travestied), and above all play on their grievances—and you have the Klan. Its spokesmen can all rival Dr. Verwoerd in sanctimoniousness; I remember seeing a

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newspaper interview in which some Grand Wizard or other was asked to comment on the murder of Mrs. Violet Liuzzo. "Of course we regret violence," said the Wizard, "but who causes it? If this woman had been home tending her children instead of riding in the front seat of a car with a buck nigra, it wouldn't have happened." To the rest of us, the touching thing about the death of Violet Liuzzo was exactly that she had so little personal stake in the matter; a thirty-nine-year-old Detroit housewife and mother, she might have shrugged off the whole question of whether the Negroes in Alabama could, or could not, exercise their right to vote. But she chose to go to Selma, after discussing it with her husband, precisely because she was caught up, emotionally, in that mysterious thing we call democracy, whereby we all take one another's problems as our own, and try to lift some of the other man's burden on to our own shoulders. Well, Violet Liuzzo moved in and tried to lift some of the Southern Negro's burden on to her shoulders. So they let her do it. And now her children are motherless, her husband widowed, and the Grand Wizard is quite sure she got what was coming to her. And what, among all this, becomes of the democratic process?

AH, DEMOCRACY! It is, as Winston Churchill once said, "The worst possible system of government, except all the others." No one would tolerate the cumbrous inefficiency of representational government if all the other ways were not so hideous. It is a sad reflection, for instance, that the whole historical mess in America to-day results in great measure from the genuine desire of the Americans to build a free society. The Deep South has insisted on fighting the Civil War over again; in the century since the slaves were (technically) emancipated, Jim Crow legislation and economic penalisation have brought slavery back in everything but name, and the defiant attitude of the South towards Washington and the North is hardly less virulent to-day than it was in 1861, as far as one can judge. This kind of embattled resistance to the dominant will could only happen in a society which tried to preserve local freedom by elaborate checks and balances on the power of the central authority. What would happen to a group of republics within the Soviet Union which offered that kind of defiance to Moscow? Military defeat would be followed by large-scale executions, mass deportations, re-settlement of the territory by populations forcibly moved in from outside, extirpation of languages and traditions, and within a generation the history books would be saying that the whole episode never happened. The doctrine of "States' Rights," which has taken on an ugly complexion because it has been used to justify so much heartlessness, is basically a good and generous doctrine. The troubles of a democracy spring from its virtues.

Voices, voices... whatever else it means, a democracy means a continuous hubbub of them, attacking, arguing, explaining. Virtually every American in the public eye has made his statement about the Negro Revolution, from President Johnson (whose major speech on the subject, last March, remains the most heartening thing he has done so far) to Norman Mailer, whose essay on "The White Negro" makes the harmful mistake of confusing the attitudes of the Negro with those of the self-indulgent white hipster who is parasitic on the Negro. Then there is the ever-lengthening shelf of books on the subject;[1] if, as I think, Griffin's *Black Like Me* is the nearest approach to literature, then certainly the most powerful as journalism, as writing which not only analyses but helps to establish the mood of the hour, is James Baldwin's *The Fire Next Time*.

Baldwin is concerned with nothing so simple as the Negro's demand for equality of opportunity. He takes this demand for granted and moves into the immensely more complicated territory that lies beyond it. When black and white are at last equal, in the streets and in the houses, what kind of a nation will they build together? It is the *relationship* that obsesses Baldwin: what it has been, what it is now, and what it must become. And the most challenging part of his work is his charge that the white American, by refusing to see the Negro even when looking straight at him, has inflicted cruel damage not only on the Negro but on himself. By cultivating the deadly habit of blocking off part of the reality that confronts him, the white American has saddled himself with a distorted and limited way of looking at the world. *The Fire Next Time* treats this theme very fully, but Baldwin's habit of mixing heady rhetoric with

[1] Among the most useful of these are James W. Silver's *Mississippi: The Closed Society* (Gollancz, 30s.) and Robert Penn Warren's *Who Speaks for the Negro?* (Random House, $5.95), this last a collection of tape-recorded interviews with a highly personal and interesting commentary.

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analytical argument makes him difficult to follow, and we can grasp his position more easily by going back to a remarkably fine earlier essay, "Stranger in the Village" (in *Notes of a Native Son,* 1955). There, Baldwin, recalling his experience of life in a Swiss Alpine village, compares the European consciousness with the American, particularly *vis-à-vis* the fact of slavery. The European, who has held down subject races and profited by their subjection, has no inward consciousness of having done so:

> Europe's black possessions remained—and do remain—in Europe's colonies, at which remove they represented no threat whatever to European identity. If they posed any problem at all for the European conscience, it was a problem which remained comfortingly abstract: in effect, the black man, *as a man,* did not exist for Europe. But in America, even as a slave, he was an inescapable part of the general social fabric and no American could escape having an attitude toward him. Americans attempt until to-day to make an abstraction of the Negro, but the very nature of these abstractions reveals the tremendous effects the presence of the Negro has had on the American character.

These "tremendous effects" are the subject-matter of Baldwin's work whenever it deals with the question of race. He holds that "Americans are as unlike any other white people in the world as it is possible to be." (No parallels with Anglo-Indians or white South Africans?) For, as that same essay goes on:

> I do not think, for example, that it is too much to suggest that the American vision of the world —which allows so little reality, generally speaking, for any of the darker forces in human life, which tends until to-day to paint moral issues in glaring black and white—owes a great deal to the battle waged by Americans to maintain between themselves and black men a separation which could not be bridged. It is only now beginning to be borne in on us—very faintly, it must be admitted, very slowly, and very much against our will—that this vision of the world is dangerously inaccurate, and perfectly useless. For it protects our moral high-mindedness at the terrible expense of weakening our grasp of reality.

If one accepts Baldwin's argument here, the "fire next time" becomes a very urgent reality. No nation can survive without shrewdness and realism, and the desperate mess that America seems to be in, the fury and bitterness aroused in so many parts of the world by American policies that are perfectly well-meant, seems like tragic evidence that something has indeed gone deeply wrong. Baldwin's claim, reduced to its starkest terms, is simply that the Negro must now step in and rescue the white American by bringing to bear the bed-rock wisdom he has achieved, been forced to achieve, through generations of tragedy and suffering. For:

> That man who is forced each day to snatch his manhood, his identity, out of the fire of human cruelty that rages to destroy it knows, if he survives his effort, and even if he does not survive it, something about himself and human life that no school on earth—and, indeed, no church—can teach. He achieves his own authority, and that is unshakeable. This is because, in order to save his life, he is forced to look beneath appearances, to take nothing for granted, to hear the meaning behind the words. If one is continually surviving the worst that life can bring, one eventually ceases to be controlled by fear of what life can bring; whatever it brings must be borne. And at this level of experience one's bitterness begins to be palatable, and hatred becomes too heavy a sack to carry.

I accept this. There is much in Baldwin's work that I do not accept, that leaves me unsatisfied in one way or another, but here, at the core of his message, is something that seems to me to be true. The injustice of human life, both as between one society and another and as between individuals in the same society, is so staggering that the ruling groups, for whom everything is provided by magic, lose the power of vision. That is why all ruling groups must constantly be recruited from among people who have had to endure, and rage inwardly, and wait with hope, or without it: from the poor, from the ill, from the loins of the Negro, the Jew, anyone who has known what it is to have the cards stacked against him.

But this deliverance, the attainment of this American freedom and effectiveness of which Baldwin proclaims a brief and difficult Pisgah-sight, will be based on nothing so simple as "equality." The white man has fooled himself; he has made the Negro the victim of his fiercely conflicting desires, to be known and not to be known; he has asked the Negro to accept him for what he is and at the same time to respect him for not being what he is. The resulting spiritual mess he now offers to the Negro as "equality": if, that is, he offers anything at all. "I am far from convinced," Baldwin snorts, "that being released from the African witch-doctor was worthwhile if I am now—in order to support the moral contradictions and the spiritual aridity of my life—expected to become

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dependent on the American psychiatrist. It is a bargain I refuse."

So far, so good. James Baldwin, and other gifted and intransigent men, will refuse the bargain, they will resist absorption into the homogenised mass of the white American middle class: but how will the average Negro, as he climbs to middle-class status, offer this resistance or see any need to offer it? After all, the whole Western world is one vast standardised suburb, and it is unrealistic—as unrealistic as anything in the dominant white American mind—to expect the Negro, as soon as he is able, not to join that suburb. In which case, his problems will become the same as the white man's. "White people in this country," Baldwin writes on an earlier page of *The Fire Next Time*, "will have quite enough to do in learning how to accept and love themselves and each other, and when they have achieved this—which will not be to-morrow and may very well be never—the Negro problem will no longer exist, for it will no longer be needed."

Considering that no community of people in recorded history, anywhere in the world, has achieved the condition of being able to "accept and love themselves and each other," to work out a society without injustice, hardship, exclusiveness, prejudice and mere senseless malice, I do not think we need start yet to ready ourselves for a world in which "the Negro problem will no longer exist." If the doctrine of white supremacy is finally laughed out of existence, if the Negro is finally released from exploitation and oppression, that will leave him just about where it leaves the Jew. Well, the lot of the Jew is pretty well tolerable in America at present, which is to America's credit. But what is it like in the world as a whole? In the Soviet Union, for instance? Can we even look forward to a world in which "the Jewish problem" no longer exists?

Problems of relationship are the only real problems left on earth. And, perhaps for that reason, there seem to be more of them than ever.

IN NEW ORLEANS, the Negro walks easily down the unhurried streets. He is poor, but there is something regal about him, as there must be in Africa. He belongs here. I do not see how anyone could take a long, slow walk round the centre of New Orleans without feeling that the black man inhabits this city more naturally than the white. Whether my subjective feelings trick my eyesight I don't know, but to me the Negroes are, in this setting, far more handsome than the whites. They carry themselves better, their faces do not show lines of strain, and they age gracefully without becoming bloated or withered. Is this mere fancy? Certainly the most beautiful women one sees here are black. In this climate, a dark skin seems natural and comely. In England, and northern countries generally, Negro women, though often beautiful, seem exotic; though I admire them, I have very seldom found myself experiencing sexual desire for any of them; they are elegant and decorative as a gazelle might be, without, so to speak, involving me biologically. But here, it would seem natural to mate with a Negro girl, if she would have me. And this tells me something important about the South. The coloured woman is central to the white man's sexual imagination. As John Howard Griffin and others have pointed out, one of the main unconfessed reasons why the white Southerner wants the Negro kept in a position of economic helplessness is because this helplessness enables the white male to exploit the black female. In exactly the same way, the Victorian bourgeois citizen had his pick of thousands of young prostitutes, driven on to the streets by the hideous alternatives of the sweat-shop and the basement kitchen. This is the demand of our sexual nature, but the price that we must pay for it is very high. What we desire deeply, we also fear deeply: fear that we shall be engulfed in it, drowned, assimilated; that our individual nature will be lost without trace in that deliciously inviting cavern. This accounts for the love-hate relationship of the sexes, whereby men endlessly seek out women with flattery and promises, and at the same time endlessly humiliate and oppress them. And if this is true of the relations of the sexes in a homogeneous racial community, how much truer is it of a society criss-crossed with the tensions of black skin versus white?

These considerations apply to the whole South. But the New Orleans Negro seems to me in a special position. This is not an old city —even the venerable *vieux carré* is only 18th-century—but it dates firmly from a time before the attitudes of the modern North American were formed. It has a French memory (French was the joint official language of Louisiana till 1921), and beyond that a Spanish memory. The United States as a whole is dominated by the Anglo-Saxon mind—and, in everything that concerns race relations, the Anglo-Saxon mind

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at its worst. But here some Latin influence persists, reminding us of the Latin's great gift to civilisation, his ability to absorb racial differences into one impartial structure. (Intercede for me, Scipio Africanus!) In North America, one drop of black blood makes a man black; in South America, one drop of white blood makes him white. And New Orleans faces south, across the gulf of Mexico. Is it fanciful to believe that this is the reason why the Negroes of New Orleans seem happier, the men prouder and the women more beautiful, than elsewhere in America?

Economically and socially, of course, the picture is no different here from anywhere else. The New Orleans Negro is as poor and underprivileged as the Negro everywhere. This is true even in the areas where his authority is acknowledged. New Orleans is proud of having given birth to jazz, and though the centres of jazz have long moved elsewhere (there is far more good jazz in London or Paris than in New Orleans), the nostalgic jazz-bars of Bourbon Street still make a policy of employing black musicians. Most of them are pianists: bar after bar shows the same spectacle of a Negro entertaining at the piano while a ring of white faces watch him between sips at their drinks. Such a situation is hopelessly weighted against the Negro: he becomes an Uncle Tom, measuring himself by the white man's standards; his job depends on how he pleases them, not on how far he can get them to adapt to him.

I sit in one of these bars for half an hour; the performer, a very black, leathery man who must be between sixty and seventy years old, is more concerned to clown and to display his huge sparkling grin than to express anything in his music that might be important to him. I listen for a while to his mugging, and then put in a request for the "How Long Blues," a song that has always seemed to me a very moving expression of the tragic patience of the Negro. He renders it very movingly, his hard deep voice in rich counterpoint against the sharp trilling of his right hand on the keyboard.

But I notice that during this number two or three of my fellow-patrons leave their stools, pick up their hats, and saunter out. It's not that they are protesting against having to listen to anything authentic. It's just that in a street as jammed with entertainment as Bourbon Street, you walk out of one joint and into the next as soon as your attention falters. The pianist looks at their departing backs, and his eyes, for an instant, are anxious and troubled. I feel I have, however slightly, injured him by my tourist's insistence on hearing something "authentic." Who am I, with my pre-judged notions of authenticity, to come in here and spoil his trade? To him, the need to make a living is more authentic than my need to be put in touch with something I have read about in books.

So, to soothe him, I tell him I am a visitor from England (eccentric: allowed to have strange whims: old-world), and he smiles broadly again, and tells me he played in an auditorium in London, and an auditorium in Manchester, and an auditorium in Liverpool. England, to him, is evidently a country of auditoria; and the fans, he tells me, were wonderful. I try to picture him walking the streets of Manchester. I wonder whether he has any inkling of the history of such a place, involving so closely with the history of his own people. The English working class supported the North against the South in the Civil War, although the North's blockade of Southern ports caused unemployment and English cotton operatives starved to death in the streets of Manchester (and, according to Arnold Bennett, in the streets of the Potteries). To these English people, conscious that the malfunctioning of the industrial system had trapped them into slavery, freedom was the only thing that counted: they hated their own servitude so much that the Civil War issue was settled for them by the mere fact that the North was against slavery and the South was for it. They could not look into the future, to Harlem or the Loop district of Chicago, with their hopeless, grinding Negro poverty and humiliation. They wanted the slaves freed because they wanted their own fetters struck off, and what was good for one man was good for another. I look at this old piano player and wonder whether he has any consciousness of this intense involvement between his forbears and mine. Because my ancestors, whose names and faces I shall never know, were among these people: they watched their children's faces grow whiter and thinner, they followed the pitiful coffins of those who starved to death and were buried in the sour earth of industrial graveyards, without faltering in their support of Lincoln and Emancipation. Does he know anything of this? Is he touched by the feather of the Angel of Death who has hovered over us both? No, of course not. His education was as pitiful as the education of any

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Jamaican or Pakistani child in the overcrowded schools of London. History is something written for the benefit, and from the point of view, of white people. All I can do is to ask him to sing the "How Long Blues." For those few minutes, he speaks to me, and, silently, I answer.

From New Orleans to Washington I take the Greyhound bus, travelling all day and stopping to sleep at night. As day follows day, the landscape begins to exert its familiar hypnotic effect. It seems to me that nearly all American landscape lulls the mind into drowsiness, where nearly all European landscape refreshes it into curiosity and participation. The endless dreary stretches of the Middle West, the shaggy hills of the North East, the sage-brush plains of Wyoming, the hundreds of miles of forest in Oregon—they slide by the window, hour after hour, and one's mind enters a deep, drugged sleep. This sleep is even deeper in the South; deeper, and more uneasy, more haunted by strange dreams. The suggestion of violence, as I have said, accompanies the strong sunlight; and, as in so many myths and legends, violence is played off against beauty. The beauty of the South is so overwhelming that it makes human problems seem unreal; is this the mere fancy of a literary man, or is it true that people living amid such extravagant splendour are bound to be a little mad, either nobly or bestially? Examples of each are plentiful: I stare out at the incredibly lush meadows, the stately trees, the white 18th-century houses in lost valleys, and think of the insane cruelty of the murder-gangs and also, in the same moment, of the insane devotion and heroism of the Confederate soldiers in the Civil War: of the "University Grays," for instance, that company recruited entirely from students of the Mississippi state university, who made a charge at Cemetery Ridge, near Gettysburg, across ground so exposed that not a single man survived. The Charge of the Light Brigade seems prudential in comparison. Perhaps the Southerner, born and bred in such a dream landscape, must always be either inhuman or superhuman. And I think, still in the same hypnotised stream of consciousness, of certain poems by Southern poets I have always admired, but never, till now, felt that I saw from the inside. John Crowe Ransom's *Captain Carpenter*, for instance. The Captain is a foolish braggart, at best a Quixote, at worst a hasty, unreasoning picker of quarrels; but his death, when his heart is picked out by the most contemptible of a long line of antagonists, is mourned in the poem with genuine passion. I have known and enjoyed the poem for twenty years, but now, leaning back in my seat and staring out over that languid noon-day with its undercurrent of strife and agony, I suddenly think that I know what it is about, that Captain Carpenter is the South itself, indefensible and absurd but deeply loved and, in its perpetual and predictable defeat, deeply mourned. And I think of Allen Tate's *Ode to the Confederate Dead*, and understand why he sees the dead heroes as

> *The ragged arms, the ragged heads and eyes*
> *Lost in those acres of the insane green.*

And then the bus rolls into a little country depot, the driver announces a twenty-minute stop, and we all file into the lunch-room. It has an L-shaped counter, and the Negroes, who are much the higher proportion of the passengers, at once make for the shorter section of the L, where they are uncomfortably crammed together. I and the other white travellers, half a dozen in all, sit at the spacious side. I find myself at a stool next to a man who was sitting there before we came in, probably a local man using the bus lunch-room because there is no other. Here, at close quarters, is the Southern red-neck. He is immensely powerful and sullen-looking; I fight hard against the obvious danger of subjective impressions, but I find it as easy to imagine him using a whip or a club as lighting a cigarette. His eyes, as he glances round, are expressionless, but in their depths I see a hardness which would exclude pity. If he has any gentle impulses, all I can say is that they are very well hidden under his exterior vicious hardness. I am not the only person to associate this particular physical (and facial) type with the rural South. In "Mississippi Journal," the second chapter of Robert Penn Warren's *Who Speaks for the Negro?*, Warren describes the cab-driver who took him in from Jackson airport, a country boy moved to town:

> The driver is a youngish, burly man—seeming fat at first glance, but with that hard, smooth-faced, small-nosed fleshiness that you often find in the Deep South. The belly of such a man bulges, but bulges with muscles.... The hand looks, somehow, babyish, awkward, indolent, but you know that it can move fast. The back of the hand and the back of the chubby, powerful baby-fingers are sprigged with coarse black hair.

The man I am looking at has all these characteristics: he exudes a physical power that is dis-

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maying because it is not held in check by any habit of thoughtfulness or love of justice. And now, forgetting about Negroes and lynch-gangs, and simply bringing the matter home to my own conscience, I have to ask myself whether I, John Wain, would have the courage to take part in a sit-in at a segregated lunch-counter. Because now, looking at this man next to me, I know exactly what it would mean, the kind of rage and harshness it would provoke. This is the kind of man who—at his mildest—pours scalding coffee down the backs of Civil Rights demonstrators at drug-store counters; at his worst, clubs them as James Reeb was clubbed or shoots them as Violet Liuzzo was shot.

Perhaps I was being unfair to the thick-set countryman at the bus station. Perhaps the cruelty I saw in his face was the product of my own slightly fevered imagination, and he was in fact a kindly and humane man. If so, I apologise to him, whoever and wherever he may be. But the fact remains that if this particular small-town Southerner was not violent, not a race-hater, thousands of similar men are; that their sentiments predominate in the Deep South far more than they did in the late 19th century, since it is well documented that segregation in bars and restaurants was not the rule in the 1880s, even in places like Jackson; and that these men and the atmosphere they create are the reason why the Negro chooses to segregate himself, goes to the crowded section of the lunch-counter, effaces himself and hides away as much as possible, rather than risk a casual spark of insolence that might set fire to the tinder he sees stacked all round him.

God's mercy rest on Captain Carpenter now
I thought him, sirs, an honest gentleman
Citizen, husband, soldier and scholar enow
Let jangling kites eat of him if they can.

If Captain Carpenter really was the South, it looks as if the kites finished him off a good many years ago.

And the answer? There isn't one. The 20th century has violent problems of racial antagonism simply because it has devised techniques of communication that have shrunk the earth, and brought men of every race into crowded, irritable contact with each other; the white nations, which (for the moment) still maintain a material ascendancy, can no longer leave that ascendancy to be taken care of by a few remote "colonists," easily patronised and parodied when they returned home on leave or to die. Now that we are all jammed together, racial tensions are out in the open, and we can only deal with them as we deal with all the other tragic problems of the human race: the problems of sex, of hatred between the generations, of political and religious conflict: by applying ourselves with patience and humility to the individual problems as they crop up one at a time. No one knows what to do, finally, about any of these troubles of humanity—people who proclaim panaceas are fools and nuisances—but we all know that Negroes in Alabama ought to have the vote, that Harlem and the Loop district ought to be pulled down, that coloured immigrant workers in English cities ought not to be crammed into the worst housing and then accused of making slums. Beyond that, we can only pray for enough good sense to carry on from one day to the next; and, perhaps, in this effort our greatest source of strength will be the gaiety and generosity of the Negro himself, particularly in places like New Orleans where he feels himself at home. Yes, perhaps the best hint of a possible relationship is in those lines addressed to a New Orleans Negro by a stay-at-home English poet, Philip Larkin to Sidney Bechet:

On me your voice falls as they say love should,
Like an enormous Yes: my Crescent City
Is where your voice alone is understood,
And greeted as the natural noise of good,
Scattering long-haired grief and scored pity.

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George Steiner

Night Words

High Pornography & Human Privacy

Is there any science-fiction pornography? I mean something *new*, an invention by the human imagination of new sexual experience? Science-fiction alters at will the co-ordinates of space and time; it can set effect before cause; it works within a logic of total potentiality—"all that can be imagined can happen." But has it added a single item to the repertoire of the erotic? I understand that in a forthcoming novel the terrestrial hero and explorer indulges in mutual masturbation with a bizarre, interplanetary creature. But there is no real novelty in that. Presumably one can use anything from sea-weed to accordions, from meteorites to lunar pumice. A galactic monster would make no essential difference to the act. It would not extend in any real sense the range of our sexual being.

The point is crucial. Despite all the lyric or obsessed cant about the boundless varieties and dynamics of sex, the actual sum of possible gestures, consummations, and imaginings is drastically limited. There are probably more foods, more undiscovered eventualities of gastronomic enjoyment or revulsion than there have been sexual inventions since the Empress Theodora resolved "to satisfy all amorous orifices of the human body to the full and at the same time." There just aren't that many orifices. The mechanics of orgasm imply fairly rapid exhaustion and frequent intermission. The nervous system is so organised that responses to simultaneous stimuli at different points of the body tend to yield a single, somewhat blurred sensation. The notion (fundamental to Sade and much pornographic art) that one can double one's ecstasy by engaging in *coitus* while being at the same time deftly sodomised is sheer nonsense. In short: given the physiological and nervous complexion of the human body, the number of ways in which orgasm can be achieved or arrested, the total modes of intercourse, are fundamentally finite. The mathematics of sex stop somewhere in the region of *soixante-neuf*; there are no transcendental series.

This is the logic behind the *120 Days*. With the pedantic frenzy of a man trying to carry *pi* to its final decimal, Sade laboured to imagine and present the sum-total of erotic combinations and variants. He pictured a small group of human bodies and tried to narrate every mode of sexual pleasure and pain to which they could be subject. The variables are surprisingly few. Once all possible positions of the body have been tried—the law of gravity does interfere—once the maximum number of erogenous zones of the maximum number of participants have been brought into contact, abrasive, frictional, or intrusive, there is not much left to do or imagine. One can whip or be whipped; one can eat excrement or quaff urine; mouth and private part can meet in this or that commerce. After which there is the grey of morning and the sour knowledge that things have remained fairly generally the same since man first met goat and woman.

This is the obvious, necessary reason for the inescapable monotony of pornographic writing, for the fact well known to all haunters of Charing Cross or pre-Gaullist book-stalls that dirty books are maddeningly the same. The trappings change. Once it was the Victorian nanny in high-button shoes birching the master, or the vicar peering over the edge of the boys' lavatory. The Spanish Civil War brought a

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plethora of raped nuns, of buttocks on bayonets. At present, specialised dealers report a steady demand for "WS" (stories of wife-swapping, usually in a suburban or honeymoon resort setting). But the fathomless tide of straight trash has never varied much. It operates within highly conventionalised formulas of low-grade sadism, excremental drollery, and banal fantasies of phallic prowess or feminine responsiveness. In its own way the stuff is as predictable as a Boy Scout manual.

ABOVE THE PULP-LINE—but the exact boundaries are impossible to draw—lies the world of erotica, of sexual writing with literary pretensions or genuine claims. This world is much larger than is commonly realised. It goes back to Egyptian literary papyri. At certain moments in western society, the amount of "high pornography" being produced may have equalled, if not surpassed, ordinary *belles-lettres*. I suspect that this was the case in Roman Alexandria, in France during the *Régence*, perhaps in London around the 1890s. Much of this subterranean literature is bound to disappear. But anyone who has been allowed access to the Kinsey library in Bloomington, and has been lucky enough to have Mr. John Gagnon as his guide, is made aware of the profoundly revealing, striking fact that there is hardly a major writer of the 19th or 20th centuries who has not, at some point in his career, be it in earnest or in the deeper earnest of jest, produced a pornographic work. Likewise there are remarkably few painters, from the 18th century to post-Impressionism, who have not produced at least one set of pornographic plates or sketches. (Would one of the definitions of abstract, non-objective art be that it cannot be pornographic?)

OBVIOUSLY a certain proportion of this vast body of writing has literary power and significance. Where a Diderot, a Crébillon *fils*, a Verlaine, a Swinburne, or an Apollinaire write erotica, the result will have some of the qualities which distinguish their more public works. Figures such as Beardsley and Pierre Louÿs are minor, but their lubricities have a period charm. Nevertheless, with very few exceptions, "high pornography" is *not* of pre-eminent literary importance. It is simply *not* true that the locked cabinets of great libraries or private collections contain masterpieces of poetry or fiction which hypocrisy and censorship banish from the light. (Certain 18th-century drawings and certain Japanese prints suggest that the case of graphic art may be different; here there seems to be work of the first quality which is not generally available.) What emerges when one reads some of the classics of erotica is the fact that they too are intensely conventionalised, that their repertoire of fantasy is limited, and that it merges, almost imperceptibly, into the dream-trash of straight, mass-produced pornography.

In other words: the line between, say, *Thérèse Philosophe* or *Lesbia Brandon* on the one hand, and *Sweet Lash* or *The Silken Thighs* on the other, is easily blurred. What distinguishes the "forbidden classic" from under-the-counter delights on Frith Street is, essentially, a matter of semantics, of the level of vocabulary and rhetorical device used to provoke erection. It is not fundamental. Take the masturbating housemaid in a very recent example of the Great American Novel, and the housemaid similarly engaged in *They Called Her Dolly* (n.d., price 6 shillings). From the point of view of erotic stimulus, the difference is one of language, or more exactly—as verbal precisions now appear in high literature as well—the difference is one of narrative sophistication. Neither piece of writing adds anything new to the potential of human emotion; both add to the waste.

GENUINE ADDITIONS are, in fact, very rare. The list of writers who have had the genius to enlarge our actual compass of sexual awareness, who have given the erotic play of the mind a novel focus, an area of recognition previously unknown or fallow, is very small. It would, I think, include Sappho, in whose verse the western ear caught, perhaps for the first time, the shrill, nerve-rending note of sterile sexuality, of a libido necessarily, deliberately, in excess of any assuagement. Catullus seems to have added something, though it is at this historical distance nearly impossible to identify that which startled in his vision, which caused so real a shock of consciousness. The close, delicately plotted concordance between orgasm and death in Baroque and Metaphysical poetry and art clearly enriched our legacy of excitement, as had the earlier focus on virginity. The development in Dostoevsky, Proust, and Mann of the correlations between nervous infirmity, the psychopathology of the organism, and a special erotic vulnerability, is probably new. Sade and Sacher-Masoch codified, found a dramatic syntax for,

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areas of arousal previously diffuse or less explicitly realised. In *Lolita* there is a genuine enrichment of our common stock of temptations. It is as if Vladimir Nabokov had brought into our field of vision what lay at the far edge (in Balzac's *La Rabouilleuse*, for instance) or what had been kept carefully implausible through disproportion (*Alice in Wonderland*). But such annexations of insight are rare.

The plain truth is that in literary erotica as well as in the great mass of "dirty books" the same stimuli, the same contortions and fantasies, occur over and over with unutterable monotony. In most erotic writing, as in man's wet dreams, the imagination turns, time and time again, inside the bounded circle of what the body can experience. The actions of the mind when we masturbate are not a dance; they are a treadmill.

MR. MAURICE GIRODIAS[1] would riposte that this is not the issue, that the interminable succession of fornications, flagellations, onanisms, masochistic fantasies, and homosexual punch-ups which fill his *Olympia Reader* are inseparable from its literary excellence, from the artistic originality and integrity of the books he published at the Olympia Press in Paris. He would say that several of the books he championed, and from which he has now selected representative passages, stand in the vanguard of modern sensibility, that they are classics of post-war literature. If they are so largely concerned with sexual experience, the reason is that the modern writer has recognised in sexuality the last open frontier, the terrain on which his talent must, if it is to be pertinent and honest, engage the stress of our culture. The pages of the *Reader* are strewn with four-letter words, with detailed accounts of intimate and specialised sexual acts, precisely because the writer has had to complete the campaign of liberation initiated by Freud, because he has had to overcome the verbal taboos, the hypocrisies of imagination in which former generations laboured when alluding to the most vital, complex part of man's being.

> Writing dirty books was a necessary participation in the common fight against the Square World . . . an act of duty.

Mr. Girodias has a case. His reminiscences and polemics make sour reading (he tends to whine); but his actual publishing record shows nerve and brilliance. The writings of Henry Miller matter to the history of American prose and self-definition. Samuel Beckett's *Watt* appeared with Olympia, as did writings of Jean Genet (though not the plays or the best prose). *Fanny Hill* and, to a lesser degree, *Candy*, are mock-epics of orgasm, books in which any sane man will take delight. Lawrence Durrell's *Black Book* seems to me grossly overrated, but it has its serious defenders. Girodias himself would probably regard *Naked Lunch* as his crowning discernment. I don't see it. The book strikes me as a strident bore, illiterate and self-satisfied right to its heart of pulp. Its repute is important only for what it tells us of the currents of homosexuality, camp, and modish brutality which dominate present "sophisticated" literacy. Burroughs indicts his readers, but not in the brave, prophetic sense argued by Girodias. Nevertheless, there can be no doubt of the genuineness of Girodias' commitment or of the risks he took.

Moreover, two novels on his list *are* classics, books whose genius he recognised and with which his own name will remain proudly linked: *Lolita* and *The Ginger Man*. It is a piece of bleak irony—beautifully appropriate to the entire "dirty book" industry—that a subsequent disagreement with Nabokov now prevents Girodias from including anything of *Lolita* in his anthology. To all who first met Humbert Humbert in *The Traveller's Companion Series*, a green cover and the Olympia Press' somewhat mannered typography will remain a part of one of the high moments of contemporary literature. This alone should have spared Mr. Girodias the legal and financial harryings by which Gaullist Victorianism hounded him out of business.

BUT THE BEST of what Olympia published is now available on every drug-store counter—this being the very mark of Girodias' foresight. The *Olympia Reader* must be judged by what it actually contains. And far too much of it is tawdry stuff, "doing dirt on life," with only the faintest pretensions to literary merit or adult intelligence.

It is almost impossible to get through the book at all. Pick it up at various points and the sense of *déjà-vu* is inescapable ("This is one stag-movie I've seen before"). Whether a naked woman gets tormented in Sade's dungeons (*Justine*), during Spartacus' revolt (Marcus Van

[1] Maurice Girodias (editor), *The Olympia Reader* (Grove Press, New York, 1965).

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Heller: *Roman Orgy*), in a kinky French *château* (*The Story of O . . .*) or in an Arab house (*Kama Houri* by one Ataullah Mordaan) makes damn little difference. *Fellatio* and buggery seem fairly repetitive joys whether enacted between Paris hooligans in Genet's *Thief's Journal*, between small-time hustlers and ex-prizefighters (*The Gaudy Image*), or between lordly youths by Edwardian gaslight in *Teleny*, a silly piece attributed to Oscar Wilde.

After fifty pages of "hardening nipples," "softly opening thighs" and "hot rivers" flowing in and out of the ecstatic anatomy, the spirit cries out, not in hypocritical outrage, not because I am a poor Square throttling my libido, but in pure, nauseous *boredom*. Even fornication can't be as dull, as hopelessly predictable as all that!

Of course there are moments which excite. *Sin for Breakfast* ends on a subtle, comic note of lewdness. *The Woman Thing* uses all the four-letter words and anatomical exactitudes with real force; it exhibits a fine ear for the way in which sexual heat compresses and erodes our uses of language. Those (and I imagine it includes most men) who use the motif of female onanism in their own fantasy life will find a vivid patch. There may be other nuggets. But who can get through the thing? For my money, there is one sublime moment in the *Reader*. It comes in an extract (possibly spurious?) from Frank Harris' *Life and Loves*. Coiling and uncoiling in diverse postures with two naked Oriental nymphets and their British procuress, Harris is suddenly struck with the revelation that "there indeed is evidence to prove the weakness of so much of the thought of Karl Marx. It is only the bohemian who can be free, not the proletarian." The image of Frank Harris, all limbs and propensities ecstatically engaged, suddenly disproving *Das Kapital* is worth the price of admission.

BUT NOT REALLY. For that price is much higher than Mr. Girodias, Miss Mary McCarthy, Mr. Wayland Young, and other advocates of total frankness seem to realise. It is a price which cuts deep not only into the true liberty of the writer, but into the diminishing reserves of feeling and imaginative response in our society.

The preface to the *Olympia Reader* ends in triumph:

> Moral censorship was an inheritance from the past, deriving from centuries of domination by the Christian clergy. Now that it is practically over, we may expect literature to be transformed by the advent of freedom. Not freedom in its negative aspects, but as the means of exploring all the positive aspects of the human mind, which are all more or less related to, or generated by, sex.

This last proposition is almost unbelievably silly. What needs a serious look is the assertion about freedom, about a new and transforming liberation of literature through the abolition of verbal and imaginative taboos.

Since the *Lady Chatterley* case and the defeat of a number of attempts to suppress books by Henry Miller, the sluice gates stand open. Sade, the homosexual elaborations of Genet and Burroughs, *Candy*, *Sexus*, *L'Histoire d'O . . .* are freely available. No censorship would choose to make itself ridiculous by challenging the sadistic eroticism, the minutiae of sodomy (smell and all) which grace Mailer's *American Dream*. This is an excellent thing. But let us be perfectly clear why. Censorship is stupid and repugnant for two empirical reasons: censors are men no better than ourselves, their judgments are no less fallible or open to dishonesty. Secondly, the thing won't work: those who really want to get hold of a book will do so somehow. This is an entirely different argument from saying that pornography doesn't in fact deprave the mind of the reader, or incite to wasteful or criminal gestures. *It may, or it may not.* We simply don't have enough evidence either way. The question is far more intricate than many of our literary champions of total freedom would allow. But to say that censorship won't work and should not be asked to, is *not* to say that there has been a liberation of literature, that the writer is, in any genuine sense, freer.

On the contrary. The sensibility of the writer is free where it is most humane, where it seeks to apprehend and re-enact the marvellous variety, complication, and resilience of life by means of words as scrupulous, as personal, as brimful of the mystery of human communication, as the language can yield. The very opposite of freedom is *cliché*, and nothing is less free, more inert with convention and hollow brutality than a row of four-letter words. Literature is a living dialogue between writer and reader only if the writer shows a twofold respect: for the imaginative maturity of his reader, and in a very complex but central way, for the wholeness, for the independence and quick of life, in the personages he creates.

Respect for the reader signifies that the poet

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or novelist invites the consciousness of the reader to collaborate with his own in the act of presentment. He does not tell all because his work is not a primer for children or the retarded. He does not exhaust the possible responses of his reader's own imaginings, but delights in the fact that we will fill in from our own lives, from resources of memory and desire proper to ourselves, the contours he has drawn. Tolstoy is infinitely freer, infinitely more exciting than the new eroticists, when he arrests his narrative at the door of the Karenins' bedroom, when he merely initiates, through the simile of a dying flame, of ash cooling in the grate, a perception of sexual defeat which each of us can re-live or detail for himself. George Eliot is free, and treats her readers as free, adult human beings, when she conveys, through inflection of style and mood, the truth about the Casaubon honeymoon in *Middlemarch*, when she makes us imagine for ourselves how Dorothea has been violated by some essential obtuseness. These are profoundly exciting scenes, these enrich and complicate our sexual awareness, far beyond the douche-bag idylls of the contemporary "free" novel. There is no real freedom whatever in the compulsive physiological exactitudes of present "high pornography," because there is no respect for the reader whose imaginative means are set at nil.

And there is none for the sanctity of autonomous life in the characters of the novel, for that tenacious integrity of existence which makes a Stendhal, a Tolstoy, a Henry James tread warily around their own creations. The novels being produced under the new code of total statement shout at their personages: strip, fornicate, perform this or that act of sexual perversion. So did the S.S. guards at rows of living men and women. The total attitudes are not, I think, entirely distinct. There may be deeper affinities than we as yet understand between the "total freedom" of the uncensored erotic imagination and the total freedom of the sadist. That these two freedoms have emerged in close historical proximity may not be coincidence. Both are exercised at the expense of someone else's humanity, of someone else's most precious right —the right to a private life of feeling.

THIS IS THE MOST DANGEROUS aspect of all. Future historians may come to characterise the present era in the West as one of a massive onslaught on human privacy, on the delicate processes by which we seek to become our own singular selves, to hear the echo of our specific being. This onslaught is being pressed by the very conditions of an urban mass-technocracy, by the necessary uniformities of our economic and political choices, by the new electronic media of communication and persuasion, by the ever-increasing exposure of our thoughts and actions to sociological, psychological, and material intrusions and controls. Increasingly, we come to know real privacy, real space in which to experiment with our sensibility, only in extreme guises: nervous breakdown, addiction, economic failure. Hence the appalling monotony and *publicity*—in the full sense of the word—of so many outwardly prosperous lives. Hence also the need for nervous stimuli of an unprecedented brutality and technical authority.

Sexual relations are, or should be, one of the citadels of privacy, the nightplace where we must be allowed to gather the splintered, harried elements of our consciousness to some kind of inviolate order and repose. It is in sexual experience that a human being alone, and two human beings in that attempt at total communication which is also communion, can discover the unique bent of their identity. That we can find for ourselves, through imperfect striving and repeated failure, the words, the gestures, the mental images which set the blood to racing. In that dark and wonder ever-renewed both the fumblings and the light must be our own.

The new pornographers subvert this last, vital privacy; they do our imagining for us. They take away the words that were of the night and shout them over the roof-tops, making them hollow. The images of our love-making, the stammerings we resort to in intimacy, come prepackaged. From the rituals of adolescent petting to the recent university experiment in which faculty wives agreed to practise onanism in front of the researchers' cameras, sexual life, particularly in America, is passing more and more into the public domain. This is a profoundly ugly and demeaning thing whose effects on our identity and resources of feeling we understand as little as we do the impact on our nerves of the perpetual "sub-eroticism" and sexual suggestion of modern advertisement. Natural selection tells of limbs and functions which atrophy through lack of use; the power to feel, to experience and realise the precarious uniqueness of each other's being, can also wither in a society. And it is no mere accident (as Orwell knew) that the standardisation of sexual life, either through con-

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trolled licence or compelled puritanism, should accompany totalitarian politics.

THUS THE PRESENT danger to the freedom of literature and to the inward freedom of our society is not censorship or verbal reticence. The danger lies in the facile contempt which the erotic novelist exhibits for his readers, for his personages, and for the language. Our dreams are marketed wholesale.

Because there were words it did not use, situations it did not represent graphically, because it demanded from the reader not obeisance but live echo, much of western poetry and fiction has been a school to the imagination, an exercise in making one's awareness more exact, more humane. My true quarrel with the *Olympia Reader* and the *genre* it embodies is not that so much of the stuff should be boring and abjectly written. It is that these books leave a man less free, less himself, than they found him; that they leave language poorer, less endowed with a capacity for fresh discrimination and excitement. It is not a new freedom that they bring, but a new servitude. In the name of human privacy, enough!

Saving the Appearances

The horse is white. Or it
appears to be under this
November light that could
well be October. It goes
as nimbly as a spider does
but it is gainly: the great
field makes it small
so that it seems
to crawl out of the distance
and to grow not larger
but less slow. Stains
on its sides show where
the mud is and the power
now overmasters the fragility
of its earlier bearing. Tall
it shudders over one and bends
a full neck, cropping
the foreground, blotting
the whole space back
behind those pounding feet.
Mounted, one feels the sky
as much the measure of the event
as the field had been, and all
the divisions of the indivisible
unite again, or seem
to do as when the approaching
horse was white, on this
November unsombre day
where what appears, is.

Charles Tomlinson

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Andrew Shonfield

What Space for Freedom?

Some Political Implications of Active Government

THE POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS in current Western society were designed, for the most part, to cope with a set of circumstances which have little relevance to a modern capitalist society with its special blend of public and private power. In this third and concluding article[1] I am concerned with the problems raised by the process of adapting these institutions to new functions. The central question is how far an active government wielding great and varied economic power, intervening in the detailed conduct of private business affairs, discriminating between one citizen and another on the basis of subtle and complex judgments of the community's needs ten or twenty years ahead, driving bargains with particular interest groups as administrative convenience dictates, can be subjected to effective democratic control.

Some of the nations which made the most complete and successful adaptation to the political problems of the earlier era of capitalism seem to be stuck with especially inefficient and stumbling political machinery when they apply themselves to the new problems. This is outstandingly true of the Anglo-Saxon countries. Britain and the United States, both holding to the Common Law tradition, were brilliantly inventive in using their legal systems to create an environment in which a great reserve of previously suppressed business initiative was liberated.

France, by contrast, never adjusted itself fully to the needs of the capitalist *entrepreneur* of the 19th century. The conclusion suggested by an examination of French economic history is that a set of institutions which were largely pre-capitalist in design could be adapted more readily than others to serve the purposes of the new capitalism, with its large built-in segment of public power, in the second half of the 20th century. Britain, on the other hand, provides a model of what was probably the most admired piece of political machinery of the age just past, at once most sensitive and most stable, and now stands out as particularly ill-adapted to cope with the problems of the present age.

A nation which is unable to establish effective democratic control over the processes of modern government faces one of two alternatives. Either it must accept that the liberties of its citizens will be diminished, or it must forgo the great material benefits which can be made to flow from the operations of the active interventionist state of to-day. In practice, what this means for those countries which have a firmly established system of representative institutions is that the full potentialities of the new economic system will not be exploited, unless fresh political techniques to secure the effective control of enlarged governmental power are brought into being. Political invention is therefore in this sense part of the equipment required for economic growth.

In a society in which the violence of market forces has been tamed, in which people have established rights to a rising standard of welfare, and in which change involving discomfort is negotiated rather than just allowed to happen, the professional administrators appointed to guard the interests of one group or another are a force of great and growing significance. Because most of them have never fought an election, they have little taste or sympathy for the processes of representative government. They instinctively resist the suggestion that they should be made accountable for their actions to the general public. Reporting to their own executive committees behind closed doors is as far as they will willingly go. The conclusion, therefore, is that means will have to be found to compel the "notables" to be articulate.

[1] See "Is Capitalism a Success?" [ENCOUNTER, July] and "The Progress (and Perils) of Planning" [August]. All have been adapted from my forthcoming book, *Modern Capitalism: The Changing Balance of Public and Private Power*, shortly to be published by Oxford University Press.

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THE BRITISH CASE serves especially well to illustrate the nature of the difficulties that have to be overcome in order to achieve this objective in the context of the new conditions that have emerged in Western society since World War II. The essential issue is how to expose the active and ubiquitous government which we face to-day to more effective pressure from public opinion and from the courts. The growth of public power demands the reinforcement of both. In Britain the parliamentarians treat it as an axiom that the country ought to have a strong executive. The rules of the game allow the government to be endlessly teased but not to be seriously incommoded in the conduct of its ordinary work. The British tend to see it as one of the chief weaknesses of the French parliamentary system that the lack of the restraint of the contending parties under the Third and Fourth republics weakened the executive to the point of exhaustion. The criticism that can be levelled at the performance of the British parliament to-day is that it continues to be excessively preoccupied with the problem of allowing the executive to be strong, at a time when the latter's strength has in fact become overwhelming.

Indeed, the senior civil servants, who are in fact taking an active hand in the making of the nation's policy, whatever the theory may say to the contrary, might reasonably be expected to regard it as part of their duty to contribute personally to this "informing function," even if parliament happened to be more efficient than it is as an intermediary between them and the public.[2] In order to do so usefully they would, of course, have to be given some freedom to express opinions of their own, without committing the minister in charge of their department to their conclusions. This is readily done in other countries, notably in France, where officials of any intellectual distinction tend to see it as part of their business—unmistakably a pleasurable part—to bring the underlying issues in their administrative work to the attention of the public. Some of them are prolific writers of books and articles. Their subjects, moreover, are often right on top of some issue of popular controversy. It is recognised, of course, that they cannot engage in such an argument at the level of unrestrained popular polemic, without damaging their professional reputations for impartiality: a civil servant must always appear *"serein"* and therefore in his public utterances must show *"réserve."*[3] But this is a matter of individual self-discipline; there is no system of internal censorship for members of the civil service. They are not required either to obtain permission before they write something for publication or to submit the text to official scrutiny by someone else in the service before publication. British civil servants in all but the very lowest grades must do both.

Thus in recent years there have been books on French price control by the civil servant who was for many years in charge of the Price Control Office, and on the government's economic planning by a senior official of the *Commissariat du Plan*. They are typical products of a certain highbrow journalism, what the French call with a touch of self-deprecating affection, *haute vulgarisation*, in which high French officials engage on a wide range of topics and with undisguised gusto. No one doubts that they benefit by exposing their ideas to public comment and criticism by book reviewers and others. It is also assumed to be a help to the administrator in the conduct of his work, if the public has been given an insight into what the

[2] In the early 1960s there were the beginnings of an attempt, in such books as *The Treasury under the Tories* by Samuel Brittan (Penguin, 1964) and *Anatomy of Britain* by Anthony Sampson (Hodder & Stoughton, 1962), to break down the myth of ministerial responsibility in its extreme form which treated civil servants as a species of unperson. The pained reaction to the naming of officials held to have influenced certain decisions suggested that they would fight hard to retain their cocoon of anonymity.

[3] Roger Grégoire, in the standard work on the subject, *La fonction publique* (Paris, Colin, 1954), mentions two specific regulations governing the publications of French civil servants on political matters. They are not supposed to make damaging statements about their superiors in the service and "in certain cases" must avoid making "a direct attack against the authority of the state." These limitations both clearly come under the general rule of *"réserve."* All the evidence is that they are liberally interpreted by the *Conseil d'État*, which is the ultimate arbiter of civil servants' behaviour. That is not to say that a French official who expresses views which are unpopular with the politician in charge of his department suffers no disadvantages whatever. He will very likely not be the first person to be considered when there is an opportunity for promotion, in which the minister has a say. But he cannot be demoted or dismissed for the views which he expresses; the *Conseil d'État*, with its highly developed sense of professional solidarity, has quite sufficient power to protect him in case of need.

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problems of administration really are. Admittedly, the French approach to the whole question of freedom has a certain doctrinaire quality. The right of the civil servant to publish, it is argued, is guaranteed to him by the Declaration of the Rights of Man; it is built into the constitution. Indeed, it is regarded as the duty of the authorities positively to help an official who wishes to take part in a political election—for example, by granting him paid leave during the election campaign.

NO DOUBT the instinctive British reaction to all this would be to say: "Well, just look at the result. The French may enjoy throwing off all these irksome restraints; but once they have done so, the only way in which they seem to be able to give themselves an effective government is by setting up an authoritarian régime under a strong man, preferably a general." Without attempting to judge the merit of the accusation, it is at least possible to reply that even within the limitations of the Fifth Republic there is a more frank and informed debate on certain matters of public policy (for example, the choices implicit in the national economic plan) and a more effective scrutiny of the actions of the bureaucracy, including most notably its delegated legislation, by the *Conseil d'État* than by Parliament in Britain.

The French way is only one of various possible methods of putting the essential work of a modern administration on public view. The Americans have another technique. A much larger segment at the top of their bureaucracy is filled by political appointments. It is to be observed that most of the men who occupy these posts, which in other countries would be occupied by civil servants, are not politicians in the ordinary sense, but men of administrative experience or ability who are politically committed. Once in office, it is their business to be articulate. Further down the scale of the American bureaucracy, among the "career officers," there is still considerable scope for the public expression of opinion. The rule is that all civil servants may speak without submitting their speeches in advance and even though it is known that the speech will be published, but that anything written specifically for publication is subject to certain restrictions.

The Principle of "the Goldfish Bowl"

MORE RADICAL than either the French or the American is the Swedish rule that all government documents must be made available for inspection by any member of the public who wants to see them. Such a person need not give any reason why he wants to do so or show that he has any personal stake in the case. There are exceptions to the rule—plainly efficient administration in certain fields would be impossible without some measure of secrecy—but it is not left to the discretion of the official bureaucracy to decide what is to be withheld: specific legislative authority has to be given in the Secrecy Act. Moreover, the officials who are being bothered by the inquisitive outsider are not allowed to get away with excuses about administrative inconvenience. It is up to them to arrange matters inside their offices in such a way as to make the prompt production of documents possible. There is also an obligation on the authorities to keep a complete and up-to-date index of documents received, to help the inquirer. The only part of their files which government offices are allowed to keep private, apart from matters covered specifically by the Secrecy Act, is correspondence or memoranda about a case which is still under discussion, in advance of an official decision.

The effect of this remarkable arrangement is most apparent in the level and quality of information available in the newspapers. Professor Nils Herlitz has described what happens:

> Every day, in the great offices in Stockholm, for instance, documents which have been received will be brought to a room where representatives of the newspapers are welcome to see them. A representative of the leading news agencies will never fail to appear, and through him a flood of news will go to the newspapers and to the general public. . . . Just as publicity in the courts all over the world makes it possible for everybody to know how justice is administered, the publicity of documents has the same effect in so far as documents reflect the activity of the authorities.

The result is to change the whole atmosphere of the debate on any important issue of public policy. "It is not unusual," Herlitz remarks, "for the opinions of central offices or of province governors to become powerful elements in public opinion."

The principle of ubiquitous publicity is also bound to have an effect on the behaviour of interest groups in their relations with government. One is struck by the extraordinary faculty of the Swedish authorities for achieving a consensus in matters of national policy in such a way as to blur the line of demarcation between the public and the private sectors. No doubt, the knowledge that any pressure applied on the

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government by some interested group or any argument put to the government is likely before long to become public property contributes to a habit of frank argument and compromise among the conflicting parties concerned in any issue. In most other countries government is, or is believed to be, the most clandestine of all the organisations which affect the life of the citizen. Any other organisation approaching it therefore tends instinctively to adopt a clandestine manner. The pompous password "affairs of state" is automatically taken to mean that voices are to be hushed. The Swedes have shown what happens when there is a deliberate attempt to make it mean the opposite.

Of course, the whole business is immensely inconvenient. Some things never get said for fear of being reported; arguments which are relevant are not put in writing, but are whispered in somebody's ear; public action may sometimes be delayed, because a person needing aid is shy of publicity. The catalogue of possible inefficiencies is large. Plainly the extent of the actual damage likely to be caused depends on the habits and manners of the people working the system. The British, for example, would regard it as impossibly indiscreet; the Americans, on the other hand, with their fondness for explicit personal statements, might well discover that it caused them little trouble. The Swedes themselves are not such rollicking, jovial extroverts as to feel that life in a goldfish bowl causes them no difficulties. But as Herlitz explains: "That, in spite of them [the difficulties], we maintain publicity shows how highly we value it: the advantages are regarded as counterpoising very considerable disadvantages."

Parliaments & Juries

SWEDEN thus lies at the extreme opposite end of the spectrum from Britain. The British on the whole tend to see first of all the negative aspects of any proposed piece of publicity. Will the uttering of certain words prejudice someone who may be called upon to judge the case in question? Might the words of an official embarrass the minister charged with the sole responsibility for a decision? If there is the slightest risk of either result, then suppress the chatterer.

The notion of matters being *sub judice*, and therefore not to be publicly discussed, is readily extended into other fields in which it has no natural place. A striking instance of this propensity to tell people to shut up, in order to leave the field absolutely clear for those officially authorised to pass judgment on a matter, was the notorious "fourteen day rule" imposed on the radio and television services of the country in 1955. The Postmaster-General ordered the British Broadcasting Corporation and the Independent Television Authority not to discuss any issue "during a period of a fortnight before the issue is debated in either House [of Parliament] or while it is being so debated." The actual practice of reducing the country's radio and TV services to silence on a topical subject, while parliament girded itself to dispute it, was not new. The BBC had voluntarily observed the rule for some years before this, and it was only because it was beginning to feel irked at last by its role of dumb friend of parliament that the formal order was necessary.

The public argument on the subject forced the government, after an initial display of truculence, to retreat. The 1955 order has not in fact been enforced since the late 1950s, when the Postmaster-General agreed to suspend the rule, though not to rescind it, for an indefinite period. But there was one condition. The broadcasters had to give an undertaking that they would not deal with topical affairs in such a way as to "derogate from the primacy of Parliament." No doubt a very good debate on television involving a selection of the most able M.P.s talking at the top of their form might do just that.

Presumably the theory underlying the objection to a great public debate before parliament has had its say is that the electorate—the jury of the nation—might in a simple-minded way be unduly influenced by the earlier performance, so that its response to the speeches of its elected representatives could be, in some sense, prejudiced. This, at any rate, was the kind of analogy that was drawn at the time with the conventional notion of a matter being *sub judice*. The interesting point is the notion of extreme simple-mindedness which tends to be attributed to juries of all kinds in the British system. Immense trouble is taken to protect an ordinary trial jury from the knowledge of any information from which it might just conceivably draw a false inference. Advance publicity is the greatest enemy of the *tabula rasa* of the juror. But it is not merely that the juror is denied knowledge of an accused person's past crimes, which may after all be pertinent to an assessment of probabilities about the behaviour of the accused, or that the judge will deny the juror the right to hear evidence in court, which

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although relevant might, he thinks, be misread by an untrained mind. He is also refused the normal intellectual equipment that is used by anyone trying to take a systematic view of contradictory evidence—*viz.*, a written record of what has been said. At any rate, when the jury in the Hanratty case in 1962, after the longest murder trial in English legal history, asked to have the record of the proceedings put at its disposal in the room where it was considering its verdict, the judge said no! The incident, which was barely commented upon at the time, is worth attention because it provides one of those brief and profound glimpses of the unstated assumptions underlying a respected institution. These include an active distrust of the understanding of the written word by the plain man; at the same time, an almost mystical belief in the plain man's natural sense of justice, undisturbed by systematic ratiocination; and over all a kind of protective anti-intellectualism on the part of the judge towards the ordinary citizen, from whose untutored instincts he expects illumination to arrive.

It is here that the spirit of the English jury exhibits an analogy with the spirit of parliament. Both are devoted to the cult of the non-expert. In both issues are deliberately cast in a crude mould requiring rough straight answers. The task of elaborating the answer, so that it makes administrative sense, the original initiative in framing the question and the guidance in responding to it all come from the judge in court or the executive in parliament. The jury and the M.P.s occupy the stage; but in their present guise they have a limited utility.

THAT IS NOT TO SAY that the party system is outmoded; the point is only that the manner in which the competition for power is conducted between the parties has too little relevance to the process of contemporary government. The simplification of issues and dividing lines—allegedly required in order to help the simple-minded voter to take sides—has been carried to excess. In practice, a considerable body of the electorate in a Western society to-day is more sophisticated than the impresarios of the party battle seem willing to allow. It is common for voters to declare at election time that they will support a given party because they are in favour of it "on balance," and they will often go on to explain that this is "in spite of its attitude on *X* or *Y*." There are also signs of a wider appreciation among the electorate that the act of governing is a genuinely complex and difficult task; nowadays governments which have been in office for a while and have shown themselves capable of taking charge, tend to have an advantage, even if they have done some unpopular things, over opponents who have not proved themselves. On the evidence of the longevity of governments in many Western countries during the post-war period, there is a much less ready response to the old election-time cry: "Throw the rascals out!"

It would indeed help to restore meaning to party politics if it were less exclusively occupied with the clash of wooden swords and cardboard shields in furious battle. At the cost of making the conflict appear less deadly, it might acquire more administrative reality. At present the way in which nations tend to deal with a problem which is both serious and complicated is to agree to "take it out of politics." What this means in fact is that the great coalitions of factions and interest groups, which make up the mass political parties, are not committed to a simple fixed position on the issue in question. But that is not to say that the members of any one party will not find that they tend to have sentiments in common on this matter too. After all, to become a member of such a party expresses a view about the statistical probability of a coincidence of opinion on major questions. The point about the big issues which are "taken out of politics" is not that party positions are irrelevant to them, but that there is no deep rift between the common positions arrived at by one party and another.

In fact, a large part of contemporary politics is of this kind. Parties can still provide the vehicle for expressing a series of political preferences, which in the aggregate do serve to mark off the position of one voter from another. To be a member of the Labour or Conservative Party in Britain, of the Democrat or Republican Party in the United States, is for many people a means of expressing a definite bias towards public measures of an identifiable general shape or colour. There is no reason to suppose that parties will fail to fulfil a similar function in the future. Of course, by the time party proposals are converted into administrative acts, many compromises will have been made by the politicians in power, to meet the wishes or fears of influential groups and individuals in their own party, in the opposition party, and inside the government apparatus. The last category is particularly important: the views of officials

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naturally carry weight, because they are the people who will eventually have to try to make the measure work.

But there is no ground for thinking that officials, whose views may exercise a profound influence on political decisions, are moved solely by considerations of the technical feasibility of what is proposed. They have preferences too, views about what is wise or proper or merely convenient for a government to do. Publicity for official documents in Sweden not only provides some extra safeguards for the individual against arbitrary acts of government, but also influences the political debate by making known the opinions of high officials on matters which fall within their competence. One of the probable consequences of making officials more articulate about policy would be that the party argument, grown more sophisticated, would spill over from parliament into the bureaucracy. I do not ignore the problems which such an arrangement would present, especially for an administration of the British type. But on balance the disadvantages of keeping the great official inarticulate and divorced from any politics which are conducted in public view seem to be far greater.

My contention is not that parliament can be dispensed with; only that given a willingness to articulate on the part of officials, the public debate can be richly supplemented in other ways. The techniques used by the European Community to secure the active participation of interest groups are, indeed, reminiscent of the traditional practice of ubiquitous consultation used by a country like Sweden to secure active democratic consent. It is noteworthy that not only in Sweden, but also in other European countries, like Austria and Holland, which have been ruled rather effectively by coalition governments since the war, the set parliamentary battle has been downgraded. The common assembly of parliament has come to be seen as only one of several places where elected and appointed persons argue about policy.

What is striking is that probably the most radical and complicated set of reforms of our time, those undertaken by the European Economic Community, have been achieved substantially by a group of appointed officials at one remove from the conventional democratic process. The moral of this achievement is not that the representative process is dead, but that it may well assume additional and more subtle forms than the conventional parliamentary encounter. Effective democracy has always depended on a limited suspension of judgment by the electors, on a willingness to clothe people with power and then give them a period of time for action, before reporting back to those from whom they derived their mandate. The principle has been further extended in post-war national planning; the plans formally recognise that decisions once made cannot be quickly unravelled. In the short or medium term they are irrevocable. The work of the European Commission offers another kind of example of the contemporary political method at work.

The underlying notion is that the rulers of democracy, whether elected or appointed, must have the consent of the ruled to do more than the latter would willingly do for themselves if left to take charge of the whole process. Representative democracy is not a substitute for direct democracy; it is a quite different form of government. The general point which Edmund Burke made in his *Address to the Electors of Bristol* in 1774 has a wider application to-day, beyond parliament, to the body of ruling officials appointed for a term in the public service.

> Parliament is not a congress of ambassadors from different and hostile interests. . . . You choose a member indeed; but when you have chosen him, he is not a member of Bristol, but he is a member of *parliament*.

The Individual Endangered

The second major question—the first being the problem of democratic participation in modern government—is how to protect the individual against the growing range and penetrating power of public authority. The collective provision of so much more welfare and the progressive effort to relate it more subtly to varied individual needs, coupled with the central control over many more decisions which in one way or another affect private initiatives, whether in business or in purely personal life, argue the need for new techniques of judicial supervision. Here, too, British institutions have in the past, especially during the formative period of Western capitalism, proved especially effective in defence of the individual against the exercise of arbitrary public power. Of late, however, their success in this regard has been less in evidence.

In a sense the trouble with the British courts is the same as that which we observed earlier in parliament: there is too much concern with the problem of providing the executive with the conditions that it deems to be necessary for the

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efficient conduct of its work. This may seem a surprising conclusion about the courts in Britain, in view of the tough way in which they insist on the letter of the law regardless of administrative convenience. But it may be precisely because they are so tough about the letter that they feel themselves to be obliged to be pretty lax on occasion about the spirit. The criticism applies particularly to cases where justice would seem to require analysis of the *intentions* of the legislators, in addition to the actual words used by the drafters of the law, and those where the exercise of administrative *discretion* is involved.

The principle that the courts do not inquire into the reasons which lead officials to exercise administrative discretion granted to them by law is well established. As C. J. Hamson put it in his comment on the judgment in the case of *Liversidge* v. *Anderson* (1942), concerning a man who claimed that he had been wrongly imprisoned under a war-time detention order:

> The detention order accordingly was valid by reason of the mere statement of the Home Secretary that the Home Secretary believed himself to have reasonable cause to believe that the appellant ought to be locked up.

Some judges have been increasingly irked by the petty way in which the executive's right to refuse to give reasons is exercised. In a case in 1964 involving a dispute between the British Railways Board and a group of hotels (the *Grosvenor Hotel* case), in the course of which the Minister of Transport, responsible for the Board, refused to produce a document that was held to be relevant, claiming Crown privilege, one of the judges commented that he "detected a desire in the official mind to push ever forward the frontiers of secrecy—a process which he regarded with distaste." Another judge in the same case went further. He said that when Crown privilege was unreasonably claimed in matters like this, "the Court ought to have the power to override the Executive." In Lord Justice Salmon's view,

> it was incredible that the public service should not function properly unless commonplace communications between one civil servant and another were privileged from production.... Industry seemed to have got along very well without privilege for communications even at the highest level. The law had already given the Executive complete protection in respect of high level communications and communications made under a statutory duty.

THERE IS NO MYSTERY about what is lacking: it is a system of administrative law which will allow acts of official discretion to be judged by an independent tribunal. But there is no means of accommodating such a reform without pulling the doctrine of ministerial responsibility up by the roots. The result of not making the wrench is a profound distortion at the centre of the administrative system.

> The civil servant in England [C. J. Hamson says] necessarily suffers a gross professional deformation, not by reason of any naturally inherent vice but mainly by reason of the condition in which he operates—namely, as the bearer collectively within the community of a power which is as great as it is arbitrary.

It is a comfort that civilised administrative habits and a strong tradition of fair play limit the actual employment of this arbitrary power. But it might also be argued that the cultivated reticence of the British civil servant, the restraint on his initiative, and the damper on verbal expression, which he accepts as the price for being left undisturbed in the twilight zone between parliament and the people whom he administers, endow Britain with a less effective form of public power than the natural talent of the nation is capable of providing.

FOR PURPOSES of comparison it is useful to take another case, in France, involving a refusal by the government to produce documents for a court.

This is the case of the five students, now celebrated in French administrative law (*Barel and others*), who in 1953 tried to enter the *École Nationale d'Administration*, the school which has to be attended in order to gain entry to the senior grades of the civil service, and were refused permission to sit for the competitive examination. The person responsible for the order turning down their applications was the State Secretary acting on behalf of the Prime Minister, at that time M. Laniel; and there is no doubt that he did so because he believed that these men were Communists. The students applied to the *Conseil d'État* for relief, and the *Conseil*, after considering the case, asked the minister for an explanation. This he refused to provide, alleging that he had full discretionary power to decide who should sit for the examination; the *Conseil's* request to inspect the official documents in the case was turned down. The *Conseil* thereupon annulled the minister's order, and the students were given the right to take the examination.

The detail of such cases as this is less interest-

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ing than the principle which moves the lawyers of the *Conseil d'État* to seek out the arbitrary element in acts of administrative discretion and devise ingenious ways of subjecting it to some degree of explicit discipline. It is its constant pressure on the administration to explain itself which is the *Conseil's* most valuable contribution. Not that this is done in a hostile or niggling spirit. On the contrary, the authority of the members of the *Conseil* depends in part on the fact that they are members of the administrative service and know at first hand what the problems of administration are really like. When they hand down a judgment, they do not, as English judges would deliberately try to do, exclude such considerations from their thoughts.

THE FRENCH VERSION of administrative justice makes demands on the political awareness of the judges, not only in considering the problems of the executive arm, but also in relation to the purposes of the legislature. To some extent the two sets of considerations tend to counterbalance one another—at any rate they sometimes point in opposite directions. On the one hand, the administrative judges are supposed to take account of the practical needs of the administrators in running day-to-day government of the country; on the other hand, it is their duty to act as the guardians of the long-term *intention* of the legislators. The executive is ever present and articulate; the original makers of a law are usually silent, and if they happen to speak they do not have to be listened to. Having made the law, their personal function is at an end. However, it is part of the duty of the administrative judge to ensure that an ill or ambiguously drafted law does not produce consequences which the legislature failed to foresee, and which it would have tried to prevent if it had done so. In order to decide the matter, the judge will go behind the literal meaning of the words, back to the recorded views of those responsible for making the law, and will interpret its significance in the light of these *"travaux préparatoires."*

The separation of powers, therefore, breaks down at both ends; not only are the judges acting as the allies of the executive arm, they are also doing part of the work of the legislative arm.

By contrast, the British judicial reaction, when faced with an inadequately drafted law which distorts the intention of those who made it, is that it is up to parliament to make a new and better law. In the meanwhile the existing law must be applied as it stands; and judges, in interpreting it, will conscientiously stick to the meaning of the words in which the law happens to be expressed. They refuse to go beyond those words and look at independent evidence of what those who made the law were trying to achieve. This whole approach, as Bertrand de Jouvenel has pointed out, is characteristic of a certain kind of traditional society—a "nomocracy," where "the Law, made independently of the active Power, prescribed and circumscribed its operations." The law was supposed to be absolutely explicit about all the details of its application and to foresee all the circumstances in which it might have to be applied. De Jouvenel contrasts this political system with the "telocracies"; here "the active Power, pursuing objectives in changing circumstances, demands from the legislature *ad hoc* rules as required to implement policies." He argues that "if there are important goals of government which should be achieved, and if the ways to achieve them cannot be boiled down to routines prescribed by the legislative to the executive, then the law is consequently devalued and the executive upgraded." In practice "the faster the pace of change, the more difficult it becomes to provide the executive magistrates with a complete set of instructions for their future operations." My argument may be summed up as being that the efficient and humane modern state is a "telocracy," taking an increasingly long view of its purposes.

The Ombudsman

ONE MUST NOT exaggerate what France has succeeded in doing in this regard. The French system, for all the flexibility and vigour of the *Conseil d'État* at its centre, is still deficient in a modern capitalist society. The *Conseil* is a wonderful curb on arbitrary or irrational behaviour by the bureaucracy, once this gives rise to complaints. But it does little about the more commonplace problem of the merely inconsiderate—the acts of officials who are thoughtless and lacking in sympathy for the people they are appointed to administer. This is not a matter of designing a negative check on some bureaucratic vice; the problem is rather to secure a positive effort of imagination and kindness from public officials in their treatment of private persons. The familiar symbol of this kind of preoccupation, which is in this century

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the characteristic mark of Scandinavian society, is the "Ombudsman."

His main task is to curb acts of maladministration, where an official concerned has used the power conferred on him in a way not intended by the law. It should be observed, however, that the Ombudsman has none of the power of enforcement possessed by the *Conseil d'État*. He can call evidence and demand explanations; but his means of pressure on a recalcitrant official are indirect: he can threaten to take him to court. That this threat is a very powerful weapon is suggested by the fact that only a tiny fraction of the cases investigated in any one year result in court actions—and in some of these no doubt it is the Ombudsman who wants to make sure that the law imposes a penalty on an erring official. His own direct powers are limited to giving an official a formal "admonition."

Another important difference between the practice of the Ombudsman and the *Conseil d'État* is that the former is, in principle, exclusively concerned with acts of maladministration—*i.e.*, where the complaint is that an official has failed to act in accordance with some specific law—and not with complaints about the exercise of administrative discretion. It is difficult to draw a precise line in practice, but the principle is that where an official has acted legally but has shown poor judgment which has harmed an individual this is not a case for the Ombudsman but for the administrative courts. In France, the *Conseil d'État* is able to annul certain acts of discretion on the ground that the judgment of the facts by the official concerned was faulty. In Sweden this function is performed by the Supreme Administrative Tribunal. Appeals to it against administrative decisions are "cheap and frequently used"; indeed the Swedish authorities claim that one of the reasons for the relatively small number of complaints submitted to the Ombudsman—about one thousand a year in the late 1950s—is that people often find this other remedy against the unfair exercise of administrative power more convenient for their purposes.

There are, however, certain kinds of administrative power which are peculiarly sensitive to the threat of publicity. Especially when wielded by a body with the recognised function of securing fair play beyond the normal means of the courts, it is a uniquely effective form of pressure against the more elusive kind of bureaucratic abuse. There are the many cases where the administrators have not contravened any law or even been inefficient in any obvious way, but have merely been deficient in human touch. They can cause as much damage in that way as in any other.

This is a form of pressure which the French brand of administrative justice does not supply. The French system is designed to provide a curb on bad behaviour rather than a spur to positively good. It may be that the exclusive emphasis on the negative check rather than the active nudge to the administration derives from an underlying philosophical optimism which seems to pervade many French institutions—essentially an 18th-century, pre-Revolution optimism about the predominant goodness in the nature of man. Intervention by public authority is therefore deemed to be necessary only to check deviations from the path of virtue; for the rest the positive humanity of the state official may be relied upon to protect the individual in any conflict between public and private interest. One does not have to be a believer in a large dose of original sin in order to find this approach inappropriate to modern conditions in Western society.

It is worth making the point that in a system where so much light is let into the obscure corners of administrative practice, the civil servant must also have the benefit of an open judicial procedure to protect his rights. It is not only that his reputation needs to be defended against the insinuations of informers. The informers, too, when they come from inside the service—as they often must if the information is to be worth having—stand in especial need of protection. A young prison officer, for example, or a teacher in his first job, is immensely dependent on the goodwill of his superiors in pursuing his further career; a malicious posting or an unfair testimonial can at this stage blight it. Just as the courts should have the right to require reasons from officials for any decisions affecting the public, so they should be able, in case of need, to demand a reasoned explanation of the treatment meted out by one official to another. Administrative courts are a necessary element in any system using the Ombudsman technique to achieve a more open style of administration.

The Ombudsman is not a substitute for a system of administrative law. He is a powerful supplement to it—pushing the modern administration beyond mere justice towards the recognition of a duty of active kindness in a society which grows increasingly dependent on the initiative and the sensibility of its public officials.

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Marx's Religious Drama

By Louis J. Halle

WHEN WE FIRST MEET, close up and in informal circumstances, anyone whom we have learned to regard as a "great man," we are always disappointed. This is because there is no such thing as a "great man" in the existential world. The "great man" known to the public is a conceptual figure abstracted from the existential man with whom one shakes hands. I suppose that Karl Marx, arguing with other left-wing intellectuals in a café on the Galeries Saint-Hubert in Brussels, appeared as one shabby young man among the others. His friend, Friedrich Engels, would one day be ironically amused at the myth of this same Karl Marx as it was blown up, after his death, by the rather silly revolutionaries of the younger generation.

What did this man have that made him, at last, such a powerful influence in history? As a revolutionary, organising revolutionary action, he was no better than others of his day. He was to go in for economics later, basing his thought on the classical and rather naïve labour theory of value, but it was not as an economist that he would achieve the topmost heights of distinction. As a political analyst he was surely not as good as his contemporary of lesser fame, Walter Bagehot; as a social philosopher he was inferior to Alexis de Tocqueville. His development of the sociological view that men's concepts reflect the material circumstances of their productive lives—this certainly would entitle him to an important place in the history of human thought. But it is hardly commensurate with the magnitude of his influence.

Marx was extraordinary, I conclude, not as a man of action or as an academic thinker, but as one of the great visionaries of history. It was the Karl Marx who saw an immense and enthralling vision of human society, the Karl Marx who on the basis of that vision created a compelling myth of human society—this is the Marx who was extraordinary among his contemporaries. He had more of St. Paul in him than of the social scientist or the empirical scholar. His mission, too, began with a vision on the Road to Damascus.

Marx was a social philosopher who did not give himself altogether to the conspiratorial side of revolution. He appears to have been happiest in a library. He was not, like so many uneducated revolutionaries, without background. As a man of advanced education, who took his doctorate in philosophy at the University of Jena after studying at Bonn and Berlin, he stood in the van of the great philosophical tradition of his day, which was the tradition that addressed itself to the problem of alienation.

TO TRY TO UNDERSTAND the philosophy of Marx as a self-contained body of thought is like trying to understand the fourth chapter of a book of which one has not read the first three. For Chapter One we have to go back at least to Immanuel Kant in the eighteenth century. After Kant had written the first chapter in this line of philosophical development, Hegel came along and wrote an additional chapter of such intrinsic power that he thereby gave his name to the whole tradition of German philosophy from that point on. Those who came after him were ostensibly commentators on the chapter he had written, calling themselves Hegelians or neo-Hegelians or post-Hegelians, Old Hegelians or Young Hegelians. Ludwig Feuerbach transformed Hegelianism, and then Marx transformed Feuerbach's transformation. Philosophy had become a matter of writing glosses on Hegel and glosses on glosses of Hegel, of interpreting him and interpreting the interpretations until Hegel would have been surprised at what bore the name of "Hegelianism," even if hyphenated with other terms. When Marx studied at the Universities of Bonn, Berlin, and Jena, the philosophy he studied was Hegelianism. Indeed, at Berlin the memory of Professor Hegel's lectures was still fresh.

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Judaism and Christianity had been based on the concept of two worlds, the perfect and the imperfect. God represented perfection; man, made in his image, had fallen into imperfection. When Jesus came to redeem mankind, he provided the example of Godlike perfection on which men were to model themselves.[1]

A sophisticated version of this duality is represented by the philosophy of Kant. The two worlds are the phenomenal world, which is the world known to our faculties of perception (*i.e.* the world of appearances that are not necessarily true representations of reality), and the noumenal world, the world of "things in themselves" (*i.e.*, the world of realities that we cannot apprehend because our faculties of perception present us with appearances only). Phenomenal man is the slave of a causal system that represents predetermination. By contrast, noumenal man, whom we have to take on faith, is free. Our noumenal selves, by contrast with our phenomenal selves, are subject to a morality that necessarily has freedom as one of its premises.

In terms of this philosophic system, the individual finds himself involved in an "antinomy" or contradiction: the contradiction between the predetermined causality to which his apparent self is subject and the moral freedom that his real self enjoys. After Kant, this distinction between the two selves, with its implications of inner conflict, comes to be regarded as intolerable. The duality must be overcome, wholeness must be achieved.

In Hegel's philosophy—and this explains the appeal it had—it *is* overcome, wholeness *is* achieved. All being is basically one and indivisible. It is what Hegel calls "the Absolute Idea." We can call it "God" (or "mind" or "spirit" or "thought thinking itself"). The reality of man, in this monistic conception, is not distinguishable from the reality of God except in its lack of completion. Perfection can be realised only through the experience of imperfection, wholeness through the experience of partialness, good through the experience of evil. Therefore, God has become split, has lost his wholeness. He has, to put it in the language relevant to our theme, alienated himself in external objects, in external objects that represent his own self dismembered, so to speak. (Man is God become partial.) History is the process by which God, having alienated himself in external objects, progressively overcomes his alienation by acquiring knowledge of the external objects, thereby making them a part of his subjective self again. Since man is real only in his identification with the Absolute (God), this means that: the world of which man is conscious as being external to himself, as being an objective world, represents his own alienated self (God's alienated self); by the process of coming to know it he makes it no longer alien, he comprehends it, he reincorporates it in himself; and this process goes on until there is no longer a dual world of subject and object, until the entire alien world has been comprehended, has been overcome and absorbed, until all being is finally one—the universal God who is indistinguishable from the human self; until all being is, more precisely, the Logos, for Hegel identified being in its totality with the rational.

History, for Hegel, is the dialectical process by which God overcomes his alienation. Replace "God" with "Man" and this is what history is for Marx as well.

ALIENATION is better known to us, in the twentieth century, as a psychiatric rather than a philosophical term. It represents a common mental ailment. The alienated person loses his feeling of personal identity. Perhaps he identifies himself with the godlike image of himself, and so regards his existential self as alien. He becomes a split personality—and when this splitting of the personality, this alienation, goes to an extreme, what you have is a case of severe neurosis. The cure that Hegel offers for this (for what he calls *Selbstentfremdung* or self-alienation) is knowledge. "The aim of knowledge," he says, " is to divest the objective world that stands opposed to us of its strangeness, and, as the phrase is, to find ourselves at home in it: which means no more than to trace the objective world back to the notion—to our innermost self."

[1] I depend heavily on Robert C. Tucker, *Philosophy and Myth in Karl Marx* (Cambridge, 1961), a book that makes clear much that would otherwise remain obscure. It has been attacked on doctrinal grounds by those who, while opposed to what the Soviet Union represents as Marxism, revere Marx as an empirical scientist, the Darwin of social science (*e.g.*, T. B. Bottomore, in *Karl Marx: Early Writings*, London, 1963).

The magic of Marx's appeal still arouses, a century later, a passionate defence against those whose criticism tends to diminish his intellectual authority. In truth, however, one could quote, endlessly, passages of Marx that no one could reconcile with the statement that the cast of his mind was "fundamentally scientific." (Aside from the passages of evident myth-making, I raise the question whether the famous statement with which he ends his *Theses on Feuerbach*, that the point is not to interpret but to change the world, is to be reconciled with scientific detachment.) On the other hand, much of *Capital* does represent scientific method and scientific apparatus. It is only a narrow view of our human nature that will not allow the possibility of scientific activities by a myth-maker or of mythical proclivities by a scientist.

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IN THE DUAL WORLD of Hegel's philosophy, as in that of Plato, the spirit or the mind or the idea (God or the Logos) has primacy. It is the basic reality, and existential reality is the alienated matter that has to be re-assimilated by the dialectical process of coming to know it. This attribution of primacy to the idea was bound to come into direct collision with the positivism that was becoming predominant in the generation immediately after Hegel. For positivism regards only the existential world as real. It regards the world of spirit or of ideas as imaginary—a world of illusions, of nominal inventions. Ideas are merely by-products of the real, material world.

The impact of positivistic thinking on Hegelian philosophy might, one supposes, have had the effect of simply discrediting it and pushing it aside. The prestige of Hegelianism, however, and the appeal of its logical structure, obviated this. Hegel was to the dominant tradition of German philosophy in the first half of the nineteenth century what Aristotle had been to medieval philosophy, what Marx would be to philosophy throughout the Communist world. Whatever philosophic views were put forward, however anti-Hegelian they might be, had to be put forward in the name of Hegelianism. They had to be considered as developments or transformations of Hegelianism. Positivistic thinking, therefore, instead of annihilating or displacing Hegelianism, transformed it, keeping the name (with modification, as "neo-Hegelianism," "post-Hegelianism"). The duality of spirit and flesh, of noumenon and phenomenon, of idea and matter, was kept; but the relationship between them, as primary and secondary, was reversed. The material world was given primacy over the world of ideas.

Ludwig Feuerbach is the principal link between Hegel and Marx. His *Essence of Christianity*, published in 1841 (ten years after Hegel's death, the year Marx completed his doctoral dissertation at Jena) caused a stir in the philosophical world of the Hegelians, and completely seduced Marx. As Engels later put it, what Feuerbach maintained was that "nothing exists outside nature and man, and the higher beings our religious fantasies have created are only the fantastic reflection of our own essence."[2]

This reversal of Hegelianism, as it appears to be, was presented as being, rather, an interpretation of Hegelianism (an interpretation that transformed it). The device by which this was accomplished is of significance because it would later be used by Marx, and still later something like it would be used by Marxists for the transformational interpretation of Marxism. The device was to make play with a distinction between the *manifest* content of Hegel's philosophy, which anyone could glean for himself by reading Hegel's words, and the *latent* content, which could only be brought out by interpretation. According to the *manifest* content of Hegel's philosophy, God is the ultimate reality of which existential men and things are incomplete aspects. This *manifest* content, however, contains a hidden, esoteric, and recondite revelation. The revelation is that, while existential man and God (*qua* idea) stand in an alienated relation to each other, the reality is not God (as in manifest Hegelianism) but man, God being merely a projected figment of man's imagination. One might say that the *latent* truth in the statement that God created man in his own image is that man has created God in his own image. This is the positivistic mirror-image of the idealist conception.

By inventing religion, Feuerbach said, and by projecting an image of an external God, man alienates himself; he externalises his noumenal self. "The real relation of thought to being," Feuerbach wrote, "is as follows: *'Being is subject, thought is predicate.* Thought proceeds from being, not being from thought.'" Man is being; God, thought.

This revolution in Hegelianism is one of the foundations of Marxism, with its materialistic emphasis. It also has implications for the meaning of alienation: by attributing all his best and most essential qualities to an external God, man denatures himself, converting himself into an impoverished and essentially alien being. It follows that emancipation from religion is the only escape from alienation.

MARX began by accepting Feuerbach's transformational criticism of Hegel in its entirety. But he did not stop there. He continued the development of that criticism from the point at which Feuerbach left off. Feuerbach had been concerned only with understanding for its own sake (like a practitioner of pure science), while Marx was concerned to understand so as to be able to change (like a practitioner of applied science). Marx was commenting on Feuerbach when he said: "The philosophers have only *interpreted* the world, in various ways; the point is to *change* it." If, as Feuerbach and Marx agreed, the illusions of religion were bad, then in Marx's estimation it was necessary to remedy the matter. It was necessary to change the *real* situation that gave rise to the illusions. "For example," he wrote in *The German Theology*, "after the earthly family is seen to be the secret

[2] Engels: "One must himself have experienced the liberating effect of this book to get an idea of it. Enthusiasm was general; we all became at once Feuerbachians."

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of the holy family, one must proceed to destroy the former both in theory and practice." In other words, if God the Father is a projection of the *Herr im Haus*, if the Holy Family of Mary, Joseph, and Jesus is a projection of the family as a social institution among men, then the way to abolish the illusion of a heavenly society is to abolish the earthly society of which it is merely a projection. Marx was a true radical: he tended always to go all the way down to the root of the matter.

Man's alienation, according to Feuerbach, is a function of his religious illusions. More essentially, according to Marx, it is a function of the existential situation of which the illusions are merely a symptom. Specifically, man's alienation is a product of the state, which gives man a dual character: as real person and as citizen.

> Only when real individual man [Marx wrote] takes back into himself the abstract citizen of the state and, as individual man, in his empirical life, in his individual labour, in his individual relations, becomes a *species being*; only when man recognises and organises his "*forces propres*" as *social* forces and so ceases to separate *social* power from himself in the form of *political* power—only then will human emancipation take place.[3]

So Marx came to be concerned with what he called "the unholy forms" of alienation, as well as with the holy. He came to be concerned with "material" or "political-economic" alienation. This led him, early in 1844, to take up a study that would absorb him for the rest of his life, the study of economics. It is at this time that a sort of pre-Marxism, an early philosophical version of Marxism, develops, revolving around the idea of human self-alienation in the economic life.

Marx and Engels were both preceded along this line by a somewhat older man. In 1842, Marx, then about twenty-four, was editing the *Rheinische Zeitung* in Cologne. He and Engels, twenty-three years old, were both influenced by Moses Hess, with whom each separately (they hardly knew each other at the time) had philosophical discussions. Hess converted Engels to philosophical Communism rather quickly, and in time he converted Marx as well.

Hess' thesis was that productive activity is the essential attribute of man. (This is reflected in the illusion of divine creativity, a projection of real human creativity like the projection of the real human family in the holy family.) The life of the species is one of co-operative production, by means of which men translate their productive powers, which are subjective, into a variety of useful material objects external to themselves. Unfortunately, however, the productive power of the species is then seized upon by egotistical men who convert its objectified products into money and private property. Accordingly, Hess said, "Money is the product of mutually alienated men; *it is externalised* [*entäusserte*] *man.*"

See what has happened, now, to Hegelianism. Feuerbach held that religion represented the externalisation of man's selfhood, and therefore his alienation. Now Hess holds that money represents the externalisation of man's selfhood, and therefore his alienation. Hegel's philosophical framework is kept intact, but entirely new categories are hung upon it, replacing the old.

Just as Marx accepted Feuerbach's transformational criticism of Hegel, but kept on going, so he now accepted Hess's transformational criticism of Feuerbach's transformational criticism—but kept on going. Hess's alienated man (alienated by the externalisation of his production in the form of money and private property) at last became Marx's proletariat. As Marx's thinking developed, the tragedy of alienation would come to be represented by a social class, the proletariat, which saw its essence alienated by greedy exploiters.

The point now reached has its expression in Marx's *Introduction to the Criticism of the Hegelian Philosophy of Right*, written at the end of 1843. Here he refers for the first time to "the proletariat," the abstract hero of the mythic vision that is about to come to him. "The proletariat," he writes, "represents the *complete loss of man* and can only regain itself, therefore, by the *complete resurrection of man.*"[4]

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[3] The reference to the transformation of the individual into a "species being" is of interest in its implications of collectivity. Feuerbach had written: "The being of man is given only in communion, in the unity of man with man, a unity resting on the reality of the distinction between the I and the Thou.... Man for himself is man in the ordinary sense; man in communion with man, the unity of the I and Thou, is God."

In the whole Jacobin tradition, and in Teilhard de Chardin, the individual realises himself by losing himself in the collectivity.

[4] The curse of German philosophy is the vague and grandiose language, such as this, in which it is written. Another example: "Communism," Marx wrote, "is the solution of the riddle of history"—to which he added, "and knows itself to be this solution." How, one may ask, can "Communism" know anything? Again: "Private property does not know how to change crude need into *human* need; its *idealism* is *fantasy, caprice* and *fancy*." This represents the constant tendency of German philosophy to make a corporate entity of every conceptual abstraction, even to make an independent person with an independent will of it. The common vocabulary of German philosophy is a mythical vocabulary. It is an offence against what Marx, himself, would refer to as "the real, empirical" world.

One of the myths Marx created about himself

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The stage has now been set for the great morality play of modern times, "The Fall and the Resurrection of Man."

THE NOMINAL is always more real to us than the real. Christ taught poverty and humility, but if an ostentatious and wealthy clergyman bears the name of Christian we do not doubt that he is a follower of the teachings of Christ. Although what Marx prophesied was the self-liberation of the masses, when an adventurer like Stalin imprisons the masses in the name of Marxism, then Marxists and anti-Marxists alike assume that he is fulfilling Marx's prophecy.

The occasion for this observation is the general assumption that Marx had a scientific mind disciplined by empirical reality. In fact, however, what entranced him was not empirical reality itself but the idea of empirical reality. Like Socrates, he inhabited the world of ideas rather than the world of existential phenomena. He was an idealist who made an ideal of empirical reality, and when he denounced idealism in others he was merely denouncing the idealism that makes anything else its ideal.

Rather than a scientist, Marx was an artist. He had the dramatic imagination of a Shakespeare, and since he lived the life of alienation in 19th-century Europe his dramatic imagination was more than tinged with romanticism. His first attempts at writing were in the field of poetry. Paul Lafargue, who had been his close associate, wrote of him after his death:

> He knew Heine and Goethe by heart and often quoted them in his conversations; he was an assiduous reader of poets in all European languages. Every year he read Aeschylus in the Greek original. He considered him and Shakespeare as the greatest dramatic geniuses humanity ever gave birth to. His respect for Shakespeare was boundless: he made a detailed study of his works and knew even the least important of his characters. His whole family had a real cult for the great English dramatist; his three daughters knew many of his works by heart.

His daughter, Mrs. Eleanor Marx-Aveling, in her affectionate reminiscences of her childhood, wrote:

> ... to me, as to my sisters before me, he read the whole of Homer, the whole *Niebelungen Lied, Gudrun, Don Quixote*, the *Arabian Nights*, etc. As to Shakespeare he was the Bible of our house, seldom out of our hands or mouths. By the time I was six I knew scene upon scene of Shakespeare by heart.

In *Capital* he repeatedly cites passages of Shakespeare (as well as of Greek and Italian classics in the original language), sometimes quoting them at length.

Marx even produced a children's version of the mythic drama that was his life-work. One of the stories that he made up to tell his children, according to Mrs. Marx-Aveling, was of Hans Röckle,

> a Hoffmann-like magician, who kept a toyshop, and who was always "hard up." His shop was full of the most wonderful things—of wooden men and women, giants and dwarfs, kings and queens, workmen and masters, animals and birds as numerous as Noah got into the Ark, tables and chairs, carriages, boxes of all sorts and sizes. And though he was a magician, Hans could never meet his obligations either to the devil or the butcher, and was therefore—much against the grain—constantly obliged to sell his toys to the devil. These then went through wonderful adventures—always ending in a return to Hans Röckle's shop.

Unless we understand Marx as primarily a man of literary imagination we do not understand him at all. His completed conception of history belongs to the category of dramatic literature, and this accounts for its hold on men's minds.

ABOUT THE END of 1843, Marx's dramatic imagination began to acquire, as one of its

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was that his doctrine had been formed on the basis of *a priori* empirical evidence from the material world. This reflects his concept of matter as preceding mind. (In the Beginning was Flesh, and out of Flesh came the Word.) The vision of *The Communist Manifesto*, however, represented the German intellectual tradition of *a priori* concepts. In this respect he was the opposite of his contemporary, Alexis de Tocqueville, who travelled in America to study a democratic society at first hand, empirically, reserving his conceptual conclusions until he had made himself directly familiar with the facts. The actors in Marx's vision of history were those conceptual abstractions called social classes. He did not derive them from direct knowledge of material men and women. Such knowledge as he had of the proletariat, for example, he got from books. He did not himself come from a working-class background, was not himself a working man, was never associated with working men, and did not find out about the conditions of industrial employment by visiting the factories.

We must be careful, however, to distinguish the young Marx, with his German cast of mind, from the Marx who, beginning in 1849, lived the remainder of his life in London. The English Marx who wrote *Capital*, by contrast with the earlier German Marx of *The Communist Manifesto*, represents the Anglo-Saxon empirical tradition. His original vision of history is still the matrix of his thought, but now he elaborates it on the basis of statistical data derived from existential reality.

With Marx, the idea of empiricism came first, but was realised only in the second half of his career. Then, at last, the Word was made Flesh.

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properties, a protagonist called "the proletariat." Just as some dramatists had taken the prostitute to represent the alienated victim of a ruthless and hypocritical bourgeois society, so Marx took the proletariat.[5] He got his idea of the proletariat, however, not from visiting proletarian communities and observing the actual individuals at work and at play, but from books. In the 1840s the proletariat was unknown in his native Germany except through socialist and other writings that described the new class of urban industrial workers in France.

There is circumstantial evidence that Marx's concept of the proletariat was largely derived from a report on socialism in France prepared at the order of the Prussian Government by Lorenz von Stein, published in Leipzig in 1842. Von Stein, an anti-revolutionary working for an old-fashioned monarchy, was naturally hostile to this new phenomenon, the urban proletariat. He regarded it as a sort of rabble outside the bounds of polite society and threatening to it. Propertyless itself, it tended to be against the private property of the solid and respectable classes. Undisciplined, it was disposed to be defiant of the law that respectable people upheld. By its sheer mass it was, potentially, a revolutionary force. One can picture Marx falling in love with Von Stein's dangerous monster as one might fall in love with the hero of a novel. Hitherto he had been thinking in abstract terms of "man as a producer" who suffers alienation in the consequences of his production. This "man as a producer" was no particular man or group of men. It was what Marx himself called a "species being." What Von Stein described, however, represented actual people in the new industrial communities that were growing up in France; and not only actual people but alienated people; and not only alienated people but people who by their increasing numbers and their revolutionary disposition might actually be able to overthrow the societies from which they were alienated. Marx did not himself know them, but only of them. He had the assurance of scientific, empirical studies by Von Stein and others that they existed in real life.

The empirical individuals did not appear as such to the writers who wrote about social conditions in France, since the human mind cannot encompass, simultaneously, great numbers of persons in their individuality. The abstraction of social class was made surrogate for them; and a class is not an empirical reality, it is an idea. The proletariat, for Marx, was not an empirical reality but an idea that he associated with the idea of empirical reality. It might, one supposes, have been a less crude and simple idea if he had done some empirical research into its basis. In that case, however, it would have been a less satisfactory protagonist in the great morality play that was now taking shape in his mind.

I am anticipating, however, for the role of the proletariat was to shape itself only gradually in Marx's mind between 1843 and 1847.

AT THE END of 1843, all the elements of philosophical Marxism were already in his mind, but they had not yet been brought together in one coherent plot. Any creative writer knows this moment when something is about to be born within him. There are intimations of the subconscious mind at work, a tendency to detach oneself from one's surroundings, a sense of suspense. It is a time for going on long, solitary walks. . . . And, then, typically, the whole thing is precipitated in the conscious mind like a vision on the Road to Damascus. It had happened to St. Augustine in the garden at Cassiciacum in August 386; it had happened to Descartes, sitting alone by the stove on November 10th, 1619; it had happened to Jean-Jacques Rousseau, walking along the road to Vincennes in July 1749. Something like this appears to have happened, now, to Karl Marx. In the late spring or early summer of 1844 he was struck by a revelation.

What was that revelation?

We have to think again in terms of the distinction between manifest and latent Hegelianism, between the overt meaning and the hidden meaning. To Feuerbach, the hidden meaning lay in the realm of human psychology: Hegelianism was a psychological theory in disguise, cryptically revealing that man alienates himself by projecting the mental image of God as an external being. The revelation that Marx now experienced consisted in the discovery that the hidden meaning of Hegelianism lay in the realm of economics: Hegelianism was an economic theory in disguise.

This was the birth of Marxism—at least in its original, philosophical form.

It was in fulfilment of his vision of what Hegelianism really meant that Marx now wrote those papers known as the *Economic and Philosophic Mss. of 1844*.[6] The theme was still the tragedy of man's alienation and the promise of

[5] Moses Hess, in a typical romantic gesture, married a prostitute—"in order to atone for the evil which society had done." The tendency of the romantics was to idealise prostitutes because they were outcasts from polite society.

[6] Marx and Engels deliberately refrained from publishing these Mss. Their first appearance in the original German was in 1932, in the *Historisch-Kritische Gesamtausgabe*, III. They have now been published in T. B. Bottomore's English translation.

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his salvation. Man, in this vision, is the supreme creative artist who realises himself in the production of material objects, which then become the concrete, external embodiments of his powers. All these material objects, over the ages, transform the physical world. They gradually substitute a wholly man-made environment for the primeval natural environment. The latent meaning in Hegelianism, the meaning Hegel intended, is that man, rather than God, is the creator of the world.[7]

The world of man's production, however, appears alien and hostile to him. This world that he has himself produced is estranged from him and stands against him. It is estranged because of the way the producing activity is carried on, because that activity is carried on in such a fashion as to alienate the producer from himself in the very act of producing. Production, instead of being the free, spontaneous activity of the artist giving expression to his genius, is forced labour for another, imposed labour, production carried on in servitude. The productive activity, Marx writes, is experienced "as activity for another and of another, living as the sacrifice of life, and production of the object as loss of the object to an alien power, an alien man."

THE ROOT OF THIS EVIL, as in so many other morality plays, is money. It is the greed for gold that corrupts, transforming free, creative self-activity into alienated labour. How well this corresponds to various stereotypes of 19th-century romanticism! There is Goethe's Faust, selling his soul to the devil. There is the prostitute who alienates her body for money. There is the painter in his garret whose paintings are taken from him by the wealthy middle-man to be sold to the *nouveau-riche* bourgeois. Finally, it is permissible to speculate on the subjective element. Marx, himself, was the frustrated and suffering artist, "Hans Röckle."

The cumulative spiritual enlargement of man's being in the manifest Hegel becomes, in Marx's exposition of Hegel's latent meaning, the obsessive accumulation of capital. Man is a Kantian split personality, at war with himself: the creative artist at war with the greedy beast who exploits him.

The progressive movement of history marked by the alienation of productive force is different in one important respect from that set forth in manifest Hegelianism. Whereas the movement of history in manifest Hegelianism has the effect of progressively overcoming alienation, in Marx's transformation that movement progressively increases alienation. In the manifest Hegel, as man comes to comprehend the objective world by cognition, he becomes progressively less alienated. In Marx's transformation, as he produces under improper conditions he becomes more and more alienated. However, in Marx's transformation, which is so much more dramatic than the original, history still comes to the same end. It comes to that end by a catastrophic total revolution that changes everything, man's nature and the circumstances in which he produces alike. It comes to that end by a revolution in which the greedy beast is captured and destroyed, the Kantian alienation being finally overcome forevermore. This revolution is the Marxian equivalent of the Second Coming. Alienation increases until the last scene of all, when it is overcome by revolution. So Paradise is regained.

PARADISE is not, however, regained immediately. There is a period of purgatory before a redeemed mankind can come into its inheritance. This is the short transitional period of what, in the *Mss. of 1844*, Marx called "crude Communism"—equivalent to what he would later call "the dictatorship of the proletariat." One reason why Marx and Engels withheld these manuscripts from publication may well have been that in them Marx described this transitional period as one of infinite degradation. At this penultimate stage of man's progress he has to go through an unmitigated vileness and viciousness as the condition precedent to

[7] It was not only at this early stage that Marx regarded man as the creative artist (Hans Röckle). In *Capital* (Moscow, 1961, Vol. I, pp. 177–8) he writes that, by "acting on the external world and changing it, [man] at the same time changes his own nature. He develops his slumbering powers and compels them to act in obedience to his sway. We are not now dealing with those primitive instinctive forms of labour that remind us of the mere animal. An immeasurable interval of time separates the state of things in which a man brings his labour-power to market for sale as a commodity, from that state in which human labour was still in its first instinctive stage. We pre-suppose labour in a form that stamps it as exclusively human. A spider conducts operations that resemble those of a weaver, and a bee puts to shame many an architect in the construction of her cells. But what distinguishes the worst architect from the best of bees is this, that the architect raises his structure in imagination before he erects it in reality. At the end of every labour-process, we get a result that already existed in the imagination of the labourer at its commencement."

This, to my mind, is Marx at the pinnacle of his greatness. Here he anticipates modern evolutionary theory. This is the great and authentic vision. If he had not gone on to develop it in terms that foretold the future specifically, and if he had not vulgarised it in other ways, one could hardly question his title to be numbered among the truly great philosophers.

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the self-change that will usher in the Paradise of ultimate Communism. In this period of crude Communism, greed will become universal; the institution of marriage will dissolve and all women will descend into a state of universal prostitution; private property, recaptured from the capitalists, will minister to everyone's gluttony.[8]

Then, however, at a given moment, human nature will change. Then the utopian anarchy of forevermore will at last prevail. Then, says Marx, there will be

> *positive* abolition of *private property*, of *human self-alienation*.... [Communism will become] *the definitive* resolution of the antagonism between man and nature, and between man and man. It is the true solution of the conflict between existence and essence, between objectification and self-affirmation, between freedom and necessity, between individual and species. It is the solution of the riddle of history and knows itself to be this solution.

Then there will be transcendence of religion, the family, the state, law, morality, science, art, etc., etc. Then men will produce freely, as artists fulfilling themselves in artistic creation. Then they will realise their natural tendency to arrange things "according to the laws of beauty." Then the alienation of men's production will be overcome, for greed itself will have been overcome. As Marx puts it: "all *objects* become for [man] the *objectification of himself*. The objects then confirm and realise his individuality, they are *his own* objects, *i.e.*, man himself becomes the object." (This, in economic terms, is simply the Hegelian process of assimilating the objective and alien world to one's subjective self.) And so, finally, there will be no ownership, public or private. There will be no property, not even "national property." Man and external nature will have become one.

We should have no difficulty in recognising this mythic drama, for it is the drama of *Genesis*, of the Holy Grail, of Goethe's *Faust*; it is the drama of Odysseus; it is the story of Cinderella. It is the universal myth of mankind, so much so that one wonders whether it must not, in its essence, be true. In *Genesis*, God created man in his own image—*i.e.*, made him a divine creature. But man also had an element of greed that moved him to taste of the forbidden fruit, thereby bringing about his fall, his expulsion from Paradise. In Marx's re-writing, man was an artist of divine creativity. But he also had an element of greed which moved him to sell his creations for gold. Just as Adam and Eve found themselves in an alien world as a consequence of their greed, so Marxian man found himself the inhabitant of an alien world that he had brought into being by his greed. In Christian theology, Paradise is finally regained after the Second Coming and the Day of Judgment. In Marx's vision, Paradise is finally regained after the Revolution.

[8] In *Revelations* 20, the reader will find a similar prediction of the penultimate. Immediately prior to the establishment of the Kingdom of Heaven on Earth, Satan will be loosed from his bonds for a final fling.

WHAT I HAVE just described is the original, philosophical Marxism, as set forth in the *Mss. of 1844*. How does it differ from the mature Marxism of *The Communist Manifesto* (1848), which has its first expression in Marx's *The German Ideology* (1845–46)?

Marx's original protagonist was that great abstraction, man, undivided and undifferentiated, the "species being." The conflict of the historic drama was an inner conflict, as it had been ever since Kant. The difficulties this posed, for a dramatist seeking a clear-cut, workmanlike resolution of the conflict, would naturally have moved Marx increasingly to think of the two antagonists within the "species being" as two persons, as Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. This tendency, carried to its implicit conclusion, constitutes the difference between the original and the final Marxism.

In the final Marxism, man has disappeared. The "species being" is gone. There is no such thing in the empirical reality to which Marx was always appealing. Man, however, is not replaced by individual men. The real actors in Marx's drama are two social classes: the proletarian and the capitalist. They have now become separate persons, rather than separate aspects of the same person. In *The Communist Manifesto* he and Engels will express their contempt of German socialism because it has espoused, "not the interests of the proletariat but the interests of human nature, of man in general, who belongs to no class, has no reality, and subsists only in the misty realm of philosophical fantasy." The proletarian is the good man, the creative artist. The capitalist is the bad man, the embodiment of greed. The great drama of good and evil, of man's fall and his redemption, of Paradise lost and Paradise regained, remains essentially the same. But it is made less abstruse, it is simplified by having different actors represent its different elements. I might have a hard time explaining the drama of split personality to my younger children; but I would have no difficulty at all explaining the drama of the Good Proletarian and the Wicked Capitalist. Hegel (and the transformational criticism of Hegel) had not been for the common mind. The final Marxism was. It had the advantage over the

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Kantian concept of inner conflict within one person that it represented the fallacy of the two species, which is native to the common mind.

This conversion of the inner conflict into an outer conflict ostensibly (but only ostensibly) eliminated the theme of alienation. Man had been alienated from himself; but the proletarian's alienation takes the form of enslavement, and the term "alienation" is no longer used. In the revolution, the proletarian will not, ostensibly, overcome alienation, he will overcome the capitalist.

In the final version of Marxism there is a hero called the Proletariat and a villain called the Capitalist. The villain holds the hero in bondage and tortures him. But—the hero is growing in his strength all the time, and secretly his wrath is rising even as he continues to stoop under the villain's yoke. So history approaches its last act: the day when the hero shall suddenly rise up, and cast off his yoke, and burst asunder his chains. Then shall the mighty fall. Then shall the cringing villain, the erstwhile persecutor and exploiter, be cast down. Then shall the Capitalist be consumed in the Proletariat's vengeance.

WE UNDERSTAND Marx best as a visionary who was overcome by a great dramatic vision, false or true, on the Road to Damascus. We understand him best as the maker of a myth, for his vision was of an essentially mythic world.

To say this is not to render a judgment on the truth or falsity of Marxism, for myth is one of the forms in which truth is expressed, and in which it is apprehended by us limited mortals. What I regard, for example, as the myth of the Fall of Man in *Genesis* surely expresses a truth —the same truth as takes a different form in the works of Sigmund Freud, who was also a great myth-maker.

Myths may express truth, but they express it symbolically rather than literally. A century of history, by failing to realise any of Marx's fundamental predictions, has shown that, in a literal sense, the Marxian myth was false. But this is to be expected of any myth. The question to ask, therefore, is whether it represents some truth, not literally but symbolically.

"The projection of an inner moral drama upon the outer world is the essence of myth" (Tucker). The inner moral drama that is the essence of Marxism is the classic drama of man's alienation—the theme of so much literature from the Greek myths, and from *Genesis*, to our own day. The projection upon the outer world of this inner moral drama takes the form of a contest between the two halves of a mankind that has become divided against itself. What is symbolised is the conflict between the two selves, which is the theme of Kant, Hegel, and Feuerbach, which is Marx's "manifest" theme until that moment in 1844 or 1845 when it finally is translated into the dramatic myth of good and evil, of the two social classes as contending persons like God and Satan—the whole ending in the eschatological beatitude that follows the ultimate triumph of the good.

APPRECIATING Marx in these terms, it becomes understandable that he should appear in modern history as a figure of such Titanic power. It becomes understandable that his thought captured the imagination of people all over the earth, that it had the power to sway whole nations as the rantings of a Bakunin or the fabricated myths of an Auguste Comte could never do.

Marx was not a sinister character bent on destroying civilisation by devious devices. He was no more a villain on the scene of history than Joan of Arc was. He was, rather, a man of a vast literary imagination, nourished on Aeschylus and Shakespeare, who had a mythic vision that, in the circumstances of the industrial revolution as it had developed by the middle of the 19th century, was destined to move men with the power of a new religion. At a time when factories were mushrooming in England and on the Continent, when millions of people were losing their ancient independence and becoming wage-slaves to the owners of the new machines—at such a time, what could have greater appeal than this drama in which the oppressed proletarian, suddenly in the last act, overthrows the capitalist tyrant, bringing into being the Kingdom of Heaven on Earth?

The Gospel story had promised the poor and downtrodden of the Roman world that they should be first, and the first should be last, on the Day of Judgment that was expected within an imminent or at least, a foreseeable future. This myth had solaced half mankind for nineteen centuries. With industrialisation and urbanisation, however, it began to seem remote and unreal. Jesus had spoken to shepherds in pastoral terms, not to factory workers in the terms of an industrial society. Marx's mythic vision, then, filled the growing emptiness of belief, offering to city workers the hope and the promise of their redemption and salvation—on that day of final judgment when the trumpet should at last blow the signal for revolution. Then "the first shall be last; and the last shall be first."

Marxism met the city man's need for a new body of belief. It met the need for a religion of the industrial age.

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FILM

Stream of Self-Consciousness

By Francis Wyndham

THE CINEMA, that precocious art, has entered a phase of self-consciousness which is threatening to stunt its growth.

This is not to announce that it has passed from a primitive stage of artless charm to one of technical sophistication and aesthetic responsibility: it made *that* transition very early on in its development—certainly before 1921, the year of Chaplin's *The Kid*, Stroheim's *Foolish Wives*, Rex Ingram's *The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse*, Fritz Lang's *Destiny* and D. W. Griffith's *Orphans of the Storm*. These directors already understood the medium to be as complex, as demanding and potentially as powerful as any other; they were self-conscious to the degree that (as art involves self-expression) every artist must be conscious of himself. But the new self-consciousness is altogether different. It contains an element of apology, of deprecation, which merges into defiance and leads to a fatal self-indulgence. Films now hysterically draw attention to the fact that they *are* films, as if that were the point and everything else (visual beauty, intellectual content, even entertainment value) merely a pretext for driving it home.

By a historical accident, the cinema came into being at a moment when art in general was entering a self-conscious phase—when writers were trying to transcend the limitations of language and painters to redefine the function of paint. But, in a self-consciously "modern" age, the cinema had the great advantage of *being* modern; a child of the twentieth century, every move it made, whether good or bad, could only be new. Without a history, it had no need to make a self-conscious rejection of the past: happily engaged in exploring its own technical resources, it was spared the self-conscious re-examination of tools (words, notes, perspectives) grown rusty with use in fabricating former masterpieces. Inevitably, it reflected some of the experiments and discoveries in other contemporary spheres: expressionism in *Caligari*, surrealism in Cocteau, popular Freud in a million middlebrow flashbacks. But, until recently, it has been too busy establishing itself to question or defend its right to exist. It has taken itself for granted. Now it is beginning to doubt its own identity, which it feels the need to assert by repeated allusions to its brief past. It has become a vehicle for its own reassurance.

THERE ARE TWO kinds of self-consciousness; the adolescent, betraying itself by painful shyness, *gauche* aggression or sulky silence; and the decadent, in which a mode of expression (clothes, speech, manners, style) is given an importance disproportionate to the thing expressed. The prototype for the first is the Bohemian and the prototype for the second is the Dandy: variations on these self-conscious figures recur throughout social history and the history of art. In the cinema, highbrow self-consciousness (mainly found in the work of French directors) is decadent in origin; low-brow self-consciousness (the Bond films; *Whatever Happened to Baby Jane?*) is adolescent; middle-brow self-consciousness (*Tom Jones*; *A Hard Day's Night*) is a mixture of both. The key to all three is in the popular phrase—always spoken with approval—"sending oneself up."

Neither "art" nor "entertainment" can now be taken straight. Jean-Luc Godard, one of the most serious film-makers there has ever been, goes to desperate lengths to avoid a serious air and to deny a serious intention (with the ironic result that he sometimes succeeds too well). The James Bond films are shy of even the relative seriousness of the Fleming books, doggedly sending up a send-up. To appreciate *From Russia with Love* it is necessary to take the visual allusion to *Call me Bwana*, made by the same company. Similarly, in *The Ipcress File* one is expected to recognise Len Deighton's cookstrip in Harry Palmer's kitchen. These films are embarrassed by the fact of being thrillers, which they successfully disguise beneath gossipy references and a mannered technique self-consciously aping thrillers of the past. But the

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results are less authentic, and much more pretentious, than the original models.

This embarrassment is a sign of immaturity, suggesting the careful *insouciance* and involuntary pomposity of a schoolboy's essay. If the cinema is too old to justify these adolescent contortions, it is not sufficiently ancient to excuse the Byzantine decadence into which its *avant-garde* is leading it. When we don't feel like reading a *nouveau roman*, we can turn back to the novels of Flaubert, Tolstoy, Dickens, Proust. Serious films today tend to concentrate, with an incestuous cannibalism, on purely cinematic material—endlessly celebrating, in self-consciously affectionate satire, a medium which has produced too few masterpieces to justify this narcissistic obsession.

WHEN DID THE CINEMA get self-conscious? From the start of the star system it had featured individual performers who were prepared to caricature themselves (Mae West, Marlene Dietrich), and by the 1940s the tradition of the public private joke was well established—references to the skinniness of Frank Sinatra, the supposed rivalry between Bing Crosby and Bob Hope, the fact that Betty Grable was married to Harry James, and so on. But this was merely another device to accelerate Hollywood's machine for the manufacture of personalities, in which films themselves were cleverly exploited as a medium for their own publicity. I would guess that the first really self-conscious film—the first to send itself up as a whole—was John Huston's *Beat the Devil* (1953). Here the cast, which included such myth-makers as Humphrey Bogart, Peter Lorre, and Gina Lollobrigida, were invited to trade on their own screen histories, and the plot (a fantastic story of adventure and intrigue) took second place to incidental whimsy. Like so many of its successors, the film was vaguely supposed to incorporate satire on other films—in this case, Huston's own.

In the same year, Jacques Tati made *Les Vacances de Monsieur Hulot*—not in itself a self-conscious film, but one whose popularity indicated a growing self-consciousness in the climate of the cinema. Tati's style was connected with a facetious nostalgia for silent films on the part of the movie-going public—for the Keystone Cops in a speeded-up car chase, Pearl White pinioned to the railroad track, the bathetic charm of narrative subtitles. This is a self-conscious taste because it is ambiguous: it acknowledges the silent comedian to be genuinely funny, at the same time mocking the unintentional absurdity of silent-film technique. (Similarly, the "camp" taste for Bette Davis and Joan Crawford finds their vehicles ridiculous yet recognises a real power in the personalities of the stars. For many years these ladies, playing straight, satisfied a diminishing public of matrons and homosexuals. Then, suddenly growing self-conscious themselves, they made *Baby Jane* and its horror-comic successors—which brought them a lot of money and almost as large a following as they had in their heyday. Self-consciousness had become necessary for survival.)

The facetious nostalgia for Keystone Cop whimsy was temporarily sidetracked on to the cinema's periphery: it was to be found in those arch foreign experimental cartoons that precede the main feature at "art" movie houses, in television commercials, in the zany humour of the radio Goons and on the revue stage. It was not till 1959 that the first great self-conscious film was made; Godard's *A Bout de Souffle*. Now the built-in references were sophisticated rather than facetious, revealing rather than coy; and, instead of to the conventions of silent farce, they were to the sinister elegance of Hollywood gangster films as personified by Humphrey Bogart. Godard had made a serious *Beat the Devil*.

The next year, 1960, saw the flowering of highbrow self-consciousness in *Tirez sur le Pianiste* by Truffaut (whose earlier *Les Quatre Cent Coups* had been hardly self-conscious at all); in Malle's *Zazie dans le Métro*, perhaps the most self-conscious film ever made; in Demy's *Lola* with its hidden clues to its own construction and its deliberate sentimentality. Meanwhile, less gifted French directors were preparing to indulge in an orgy of self-consciousness with such films as *Dragées au Poivre* and *La Poupée*; and in America and England, whenever a group of young people banded together to make a low-budget "experimental" film, the result was likely to be a send-up of other movies (*Hallelujah the Hills*) or an elaborately zany exploitation of early cinematic technique (*The Running, Jumping, and Standing Still Film*).

In 1963, the cinema of self-consciousness entered a new phase through the accident of *Tom Jones*. Coterie tricks of the highbrow cinema (facetious credits, fancy wipes, fast motion, sophisticated anachronisms) were given a lowbrow gloss to produce a middlebrow money-maker which (to the amazement of Woodfall itself) pleased both critics and the box office. This film was first intended to strike a robust, authentically eighteenth-century note. Uncertain as to whether they had succeeded in this, its makers added some fashionable modern gimmicks and resigned themselves to failure. They were in for a pleasant surprise. Scenting a private joke, the public wished to be in on it and found, with relief, that it was easy to understand—not so very different, after all, from

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straightforward slapstick, yet dignified by the names of Henry Fielding and John Osborne among the credits. Tony Richardson had made a popular *Beat the Devil.*

Since the success of *Tom Jones* self-conscious films—once a diverting rarity—have become the depressing norm. Comedies, thrillers, musicals, dramas—all seem uneasily aware of some inherent absurdity within these categories; in an attempt to forestall criticism, they acknowledge this in advance. But banality cannot be avoided merely by calling attention to it. In his script for *Mata Hari* Truffaut included passages of dialogue from *Shanghai Express*, *Les Parapluies de Cherbourg*, *La Grande Illusion*, his own *Jules et Jim*, and no doubt from other films; then sat back and waited to see how many critics spotted the allusions. The critics, unnerved, now spot allusions that don't exist; this was shown by their reaction in England to Demy's beautiful *La Baie des Anges*. Unable to believe that this was as simple and straightforward as it seemed, they praised Jeanne Moreau's performance as a clever pastiche of some dizzy blonde from a crazy comedy of the 1930s—while in fact the character she created existed in its own right, with reference to the film that contained it and no other.

In some cases, self-consciousness may be justified as the best method of achieving originality—as in Dick Lester's *A Hard Day's Night*, which rightly encouraged the Beatles to "be themselves." For the Beatles, as for the Royal Family, a certain degree of self-consciousness is inevitable; they are personalities, independently of their function as performers.[1]

But more often self-consciousness is allowed to run riot without reason or excuse. Clive Donner's *What's New Pussycat?* is a convenient (but by no means unique) example, actually containing within itself several varieties of current self-consciousness. These include New York Jewish sick humour (Woody Allen making jokes about sex, psychiatrists, and being small); kooky comedy (Paula Prentiss making jokes about being tall); Goonish whimsy (the opening camera tricks, the presence of Peter Sellers); facetiously surrealist farce (Ursula Andress descending by parachute, a fat woman dressed as a Wagnerian soprano); and the ubiquitous cinematic in-joke (a send-up of Fellini's *8½*, itself an agonisingly self-conscious film of a more serious kind).

The self-conscious treatment of sex—exaggerated in *What's New Pussycat?* but to some degree present in most films today—is in effect oddly asexual and seldom really funny. It is based on words like "kinky" and "kooky" which, once they are used self-consciously, lose their original meaning and are degraded to stylised show-business *clichés*. Again and again one hears with misgiving of some new film that is really way-out, or kinky, or sick, that "goes further than anything has before." It is only right that film-makers should want to go as far as possible—but not, surely, in a direction so heavily signposted that it can only lead back to where they began. Louis Malle has been directing Brigitte Bardot and Jeanne Moreau in a film of which the main point seems to be that they are in it. This might have been an innocent continuation of the "star vehicle" tradition, but in a self-conscious age it has to be presented as a pastiche of that tradition, the star vehicle to end them all.

Malle is, in fact, a key figure in the self-conscious movement. When he decided to film Raymond Queneau's *Zazie* he was faced with a highly sophisticated *tour de force* written in an invented language full of literary allusions and verbal puns. These he tried to replace by cinematic allusions and visual puns. His film had a delayed influence and the result has been, not a new film language, but a debasement of the old, which was insufficiently developed to stand the strain. Now cinematic allusions can take the place of direct observation, visual puns of psychological analysis (in Godard) or narrative tension (in Bond). Too often, the self-conscious cinema suggests an attempt to rewrite *Finnegans Wake* in Esperanto.

[1] Even so, the treatment of Ringo Starr had indulgent echoes of Jacques Tati, himself an echo of Chaplin, Keaton, Langdon and Co. This was a false self-consciousness, glancing at other films. And Lester's next film, *The Knack*, equally popular and equally self-conscious, was a good deal less original; it might be described as a sentimental version of Godard's *Bande à Part.*

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THEATRE

Rebels & Renegades

By John Gross

THE RESISTIBLE RISE of John Arden will make a good subject for some unborn historian of taste. His partisans are zealous, his reputation in the reference-books is high, and it is widely acknowledged that he is a fertile and highly original dramatist, who brings an exceptionally vigorous imagination to the contemporary theatre. The injection is badly needed—but it somehow hasn't taken. The many-headed bestial public refuses to co-operate, and Arden has yet to command a substantial audience. Ought we to assume that this is necessarily to his credit? On the whole, yes: it is a sure sign that he abjures slogans, tricks, built-in sensationalism. But it must also be conceded that he is often ungainly or ponderous, that his talent is not yet fully in focus. Like the legendary critic, he is still conducting his education in public.

An artistic rather than an intellectual education—at any rate, I don't think that the success of *Armstrong's Last Goodnight*, which has now been added to the National Theatre's repertoire, has much to do with its underlying ideas, or that anything is gained by treating it as a parable for our own times. True, Arden says that he had the Congo morass in mind when he started work on it, but the search for specific parallels will only yield bizarre results: there are no Tshombes or O'Briens to be discovered lurking among these sixteenth-century border lairds. Nor is there an unambiguous moral to be extracted. One can clutch at a few dusty truisms about pride and corruption, but what the play offers is an image of violence and statecraft rather than an analysis. Arden's main interest is in narrative: see what happens when this kind of man confronts that type of man, and draw what conclusions you will. A chronicle play may not be the highest kind of drama, and arguably Arden is unduly absorbed in the picturesque possibilities of his subject, the opportunity to display the primary colours and barbarous complots of the ballad-world which he loves. If so, the price is worth paying, for it ensures that he respects the sheer *otherness* of the past, instead of regarding it merely as an adjunct to the present, which is what currently (and erroneously) passes in the theatre for having a sense of history.

This may sound like faint praise, but two qualities raise Arden well above the level of competent reconstruction. The first (which is what makes him a true dramatist) is that his characters really engage and grapple with one another. Sir David Lindsay's rough reception at Armstrong's castle, for instance, with the courtier, his arms pinioned, gauging just how far he can ridicule the outlaw, just when to play on his vanity, is a beautifully taut contest for mastery. Arden's other basic strength is his feeling for language. He announces, rather ominously to my ears, that in reshaping the Scots speech of the late medieval period he took as his model the adaptation of early American speech in *The Crucible*, but the idiom which he has contrived is in fact altogether more buoyant and supple than Arthur Miller's. Granted that it is a pastiche, appropriate only in a narrow context, and one would be intimidated at the prospect of it being used for a whole series of plays: eneuch is eneuch. There is too much resilience in it for it to be thought of as a mere exercise in style, however. Arden knows how to make his words work for him, how to strike home with a sardonic phrase ("Ye are indeed cause for an itchy paragraph or twae in some paper of state"). He is particularly successful at catching a characteristically Scottish blend of bluntness and formality, the intimate and the pedantic. His characters talk like lawyers at one moment, peasants the next, while it is wonderful (and fearful) to watch Armstrong being mesmerised by the promise of the king's "fraternal" welcome ("that means he calls me his brither") and walk into the trap, dolled up in his grotesque plumage while the Highland samurai crouch around him ready to pounce.

The play is too long, and there are some lumps in the porridge, notably the episodes of

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the distraught girl and the sensual evangelist, both of them possibly echoing *The Crucible*, but in any case hackneyed and unconvincing. The over-all effect, however, is one of spiky integrity. I didn't see the Glasgow Citizens' Theatre production, but I can readily believe that the Chichester version is pallid by comparison. Certainly many of the actors are uncomfortable with their accents, and the final note of authenticity is lacking. But what remains is stirring enough. The honours of the evening undoubtedly go to Robert Stephens for his portrayal of Lindsay as a droll uneasy machiavell; he is steadily proving himself the most versatile actor of his generation.

ANYONE INCLINED to take Arden's ability to conjure up an alien atmosphere for granted, or even his skill in straightforward story-telling, ought to consider how useful they would have been to John Osborne when he came to write *A Patriot For Me*. One would have thought that the Redl affair was theatrically fool-proof, if only at the level of middlebrow melodrama, but it can't as it turns out survive the almost complete absence of genuine period flavour, or an exposition which crawls forward interminably like a centipede. Possibly the play enshrines political or psychological insights which justify a technique not to be judged by humdrum naturalistic standards, but if so I failed to discover them; and judged by those standards it is a botched piece of work.

Since Mary McCarthy published her attack on the play in the *Observer* there has been a distinct closing of the ranks, but I have yet to see any of her major points adequately answered. It has been claimed, for example, that her understandable perplexity over the dramatic function of Schoepfer, the pseudo-scientific moralist, is to be put down to her reluctance to admit that Osborne is exposing the special brand of intolerance allegedly fostered by Freudianism; but leaving aside the curious suggestion that a major part of the blame for our repressive sexual laws must be laid on psycho-analysis, it is impossible to take Schoepfer seriously as the consistent embodiment of anything. Half the time he travesties Freud, half the time he talks like Max Nordau or some other minor prophet of the *fin de siècle* inveighing against Degeneration.

He is only a marginal character, admittedly, but a similar haziness is to be found at the very heart of the play. What is it all supposed to prove? Cut is the branch that might have grown full straight, presumably; but as presented here, Redl is a conventional and rather dull careerist who apart from his homosexuality is perfectly willing to live by the standards of the society which ultimately condemns him. Without a more significant clash of values, his downfall is the theme, not for a tragedy, but only for a racy anecdote—unless, that is, we are meant to find more to admire than to deplore in the outlook of the Austro-Hungarian military caste. There is room for fruitful ambivalence here, I suppose; but what actually comes across is indecision, as though the author were unwilling to think too hard about the nature of his material. Only at one or two moments when Redl is giving vent to solitary anguish or disgust is there a crackle of the genuine Osborne electricity. As for the lesser characters, they are almost without exception novelettish (or operettish), especially the minor queers, who notwithstanding the implicit plea for tolerance are portrayed much as Mr. John Gordon must imagine them. Nor can it be said that attempts to render sparkling Viennese cynicism (as in the character of the army lawyer Kunz) show Mr. Osborne at his most formidable. The celebrated drag ball was at least spectacular, and George Devine was reasonably funny as the beskirted baron—although Douglas Byng would have been much funnier.

WHATEVER the artistic merits of *A Patriot For Me*, the Lord Chamberlain's ban on it being shown to the general public is of course a stone-age absurdity. At the risk of monotony we must all continue to protest until we are hoarse against the iniquities of censorship and the damage which it does the theatre—not least in putting an artificially high premium on kinkiness for its own sake. Would *The Killing of Sister George*, for example, have been so loudly acclaimed if it didn't provide all the thrills of a lesbian triangle? Not that the theme is without rich comic possibilities; while there are even more in the gulf between the public legend of a much-loved soap-opera star and her unlovely private life. Rather than explore them in any depth, however, Frank Marcus has been content to whip together a passably entertaining farce, which does little more satirical justice to the seamy side of the BBC than the current Brian Rix offering does to the risible aspects of the ballet. To begin with it is bracing to hear chatter about the ladies in Admin at B.H., or to be able to spot the pencil-point of All Souls, Langham Place, through the window: the theatre nowadays doesn't offer the pleasures of recognition nearly as often as it should. But accurate observation is quickly sacrificed to knockabout. The characterisation is too broad, the wit too obvious, the outcome too predictable. Great things could be done with a velvet-gloved lady like Mrs. Mercy Croft, but she requires delicate handling, not burlesque thumping. After all that has been claimed for it the acting is rather

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disappointing, too: Beryl Reid's George is a turn rather than a performance. Eileen Atkins snivels away admirably, however, as her anaemic girl-friend. There are one or two good laughs, three or four neat touches; but all in all a bright idea dimly executed.

THE VIRTUES of patient, solid craftsmanship are amply demonstrated by the delightful National Theatre revival of *Trelawny of the "Wells."* Compared with *Sister George*, the assumptions about backstage life are decidedly unsophisticated, not to say unsapphic, but in terms of theatrical cunning Pinero's play is much the cleverer of the two. He adjusts the checks and balances of sentimental comedy with scrupulous care, and doesn't push a joke further than it will go. A few words will do the trick, as in the splendid scene where Gadd, the sub-byronic tragedian, swallows his pride and lets his wife Avonia persuade him to go into pantomime as the Demon of Discontent:

> "Tempers, though sweet, I whip up to a lather, Make wives hate husbands, sons wish fathers farther." Vonia, there is something to lay hold of here!

The humour is mostly obvious enough: by all accounts Pinero was a pretty joyless individual, and his achievement is usually written off as ten-tenths perspiration. But this is not quite fair: every so often he has an inspired verbal flash, a sudden zany outburst. A good actor can (and at Chichester does) work wonders with a line like "One of the finest Macduffs I ever fought with was bowlegged."

The Bagnigge-Wells players may be only a pale shadow of the Crummles troupe, but they have the additional pathos of belonging to a dying world. It is this which gives the play its peculiar quavery charm, and saves the thespian sentimentality about gipsies and troubadours and the Profession from cloying. At Chichester the gruff kill-joy Vice-Chancellor is overplayed, which takes away half the effect of the scene where he suddenly starts reminiscing about Kean, but otherwise the cast rise nobly to the occasion. If anyone has to be singled out it is once again Robert Stephens as Tom Wrench, the aspiring playwright wasting away in General Utility. (For Wrench read Robertson.) Visually the production is very fetching, with a wealth of crinolines and peg-top trousers; and though the arena stage is not the natural setting for a play of this type, any drawbacks are cancelled out by being given the chance to witness some virtuoso scene-shifting.

Dandy Dick, currently revived at the Mermaid, is an altogether more primitive affair, but there is still plenty of wear in it; and once again the verbal fooling is surprisingly nimble—certainly more so than the (literal) horseplay. The bland ecclesiastical patter is particularly well managed. At Puddle Dock, Robert Eddison's Rural Dean is haggard where he ought to be well-nourished, and starts by being flustered where he ought to be suave; but in his hour of tribulation he is sublimely condescending. Unfortunately the rest of the cast (with the honourable exception of Colin Ellis' doddering butler) go in for a regular Mermaid orgy of wheezy, thigh-slapping jollity, and the fooling turns tedious. *Trelawny* may be a museum-piece as well—but even museum-pieces, as Chichester shows, gain from being in the hands of capable curators.

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NOTES & TOPICS

Reply to the Pollsters

THE VARIOUS ANSWERS to my short article [ENCOUNTER, February] on Opinion Polls do not seem to me to advance the matter very much. The main point of my criticism was that the polls disagreed over a period of several months preceding the election, and that these differences were too large and too constant in direction to be due to chance. Dr. Durant [ENCOUNTER, March] says "why this should have been so we cannot say;" this does not seem much of an answer. The point seems to me important for two reasons. In the first place, differences between estimates made by different commercial groups are found too frequently, in this as well as in other fields, to be tolerable. Well-known examples are the estimates made of the number of television viewers for different programmes and stations, readership figures for newspapers, and so on. In other words, whatever errors there may be are widespread and something should be done about them.

The matter is important also from a different point of view. How do we know that a poll, or any scientific measurement, is valid and accurate? One way, of course, is to compare the measurements arrived at with what is known to be the true state of affairs. This is usually difficult or impossible; if we knew how many people watched B.B.C. Television, or read *The Observer*, or were willing to vote for the Conservative Party, then we would not need polls at all. There is, however, a method of demonstrating that an answer is incorrect even without knowing what the true answer is. If my watch says 3 o'clock and your watch says 5 o'clock then I know that one of us is wrong, even though I may not know the correct time. Disagreement among polling agencies, therefore, tells us that at least one is wrong, and as we cannot tell which, this leaves us in a rather uneasy state of mind. Mr. Leonard suggests splitting the difference and calling it 4 o'clock; this idea does not appeal very much to me.

We do, of course, in addition have some evidence that the validity of the polls is not all it might be. In answer to my criticism that the polls had become rather complacent, Mr. Humphrey Taylor, a Director of National Opinion Polls, gave an interview to *The Guardian* in which "he claimed that the accuracy of their by-election surveys had increased considerably in the past four years." This makes amusing reading when seen against the background of their prediction of the Leyton by-election where National Opinion Polls made this prediction: Labour 52·8%; Tories 31·1%—a swing of 2·6% to Labour! It would be difficult to make a more erroneous prediction by sticking a pin in a table of random numbers.

The last point I wish to mention is the band-wagon effect. Dr. Durant says that

> not often in the social science field does one have the chance to be categorical. Here is such a chance, however, and I am taking it. Polls do not cause a band-wagon and there is not the slightest evidence that they do. There is an enormous amount of evidence that they do not.

Dr. Durant then goes on to give his reasons which do not seem particularly convincing to me. He says, for instance, that only a quarter of the population knows what the polls are saying, and that those who do know are the better educated "and, therefore, are the least likely to be influenced by a poll." I know of no evidence to suggest that education makes one proof against irrational behaviour such as a band-wagon effect, and I would also feel that an effect which affects a quarter of the total population might be decisive, particularly when the margin between the parties is narrow as it was in the last election. Furthermore, I am sure that Dr. Durant knows as well as I do the evidence in favour of the hypothesis that in the community there are a number of "trend setters" whose opinions influence other people and to some degree determine their behaviour; quite possibly the 25% who are "poll conscious" include an unusually high proportion of these trend setters. Unlike Dr. Durant I do not wish to be categoric on a point where I feel much more knowledge is required before we can claim to know all the answers. All I will say is that existing methods of investigation are quite unable to unearth such an effect if it was as small as say one or two per cent, *i.e.* of a size similar to the standard error of the prediction of the polls, and quite conceivably crucial in determining which party would have a majority.

IN MAKING THESE POINTS I would not like to be misunderstood. I am not an enemy of the polls; on the contrary I think they are a very important, useful, and desirable development. As a friend, however, I feel that in recent years they have put on fat and have settled down to a fairly complacent routine rather than question their own premises ruthlessly, carry out more imaginative research and improve the accuracy and reliability of their work. Mr. Leonard argues that

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the faults of the polls may be largely laid at the door of the newspapers which use them; this I would not dispute. Perhaps the papers will take the hint. In any case, if in the future the two main polls manage to keep in step, and if their by-election forecasts revert to a reasonable level of accuracy after the Leyton disaster, no one would be happier than I.

H. J. Eysenck

Churchill's Novel

By Bryan Magee

WHEN WINSTON CHURCHILL was a 23-year-old officer in the 4th Hussars in India he wrote a novel called *Savrola*. This was in 1897. It first appeared as a serial in *Macmillan's Magazine*, and then in 1900 it was published in book form dedicated "to The Officers of the 4th (Queen's Own) Hussars in whose company the author lived for four happy years." He never wrote another novel, and it was not until 1957 that *Savrola* was republished in England for the first time.[1]

The book has intrinsic merit as an adventure story in the manner of *The Prisoner of Zenda*. This had just recently been published, in May 1894, and had started a craze for Ruritanian romance—in fact it added "Ruritania" permanently to the English language. In form *Savrola* was pure imitation of it, though, as we shall see, the content was characteristically Churchillian. It could quite probably have survived regardless of its authorship. In the library of my old school there is a thumb-blackened copy of the original edition to show that it has done so already for sixty-five years. But today its main interest is extrinsic. Boys may still read it purely for the story, but it is hard for any adult to pick it up who does not now have a greater interest in the author than in the book. However, it is comparatively neglected by adult readers, and this is a pity. It was not written for children, after all, and besides being a good adventure story it throws a fascinating light on its author's early ideas and beliefs which only adults will appreciate.

EVERY WRITER, whatever his subject, reveals more about himself in his writing than he intends or even realises. However skilfully he may try to project a certain image of himself he can no more entirely determine the impression his readers form of him than he can jump on his own shadow. The young Churchill was no exception. He was not trying to make the reader think he was a fine fellow—except in one or two respects his book is free from self-consciousness—but he reveals in his novel a great deal about his attitudes to politics, oratory, ambition, power, death, war, army life, religion, philosophy, and relations between the sexes. But the overriding fascination is in his portrayal of the central character, Savrola.

Any number of things about Savrola, from the books he has read (pp. 35–6) to his way of preparing a speech (pp. 65–6), are exactly like Winston Churchill. He is the only character with whom the author identifies so completely that no criticism of him is uttered or even implied. He constantly expresses opinions which in the book as a whole the author reveals as his own. Normally it is rash to identify an author with one of his characters, but every reader of this book I have come across gets the impression that here the identification of author with hero is complete—Savrola has the same talents and qualities of character as Churchill has, thinks what Churchill thinks, and one has the irresistible feeling that as a fictional hero he does the things Churchill would like to do.

THE STORY is chiefly concerned with a successful revolution in the imaginary state of Laurania, and with its leader. Laurania's military dictator, President Molara, is overthrown by the Democratic Party under Savrola. In the course of political intrigue the dictator's wife, Lucile, is thrown together with the revolutionary leader and the two fall in love. The dramatic conflicts created by this are worked out against the background of the fighting. Ostensibly the plot is about the triangle of two men and a woman, but in fact the author's interest is so concentrated on the military and political aspects of the revolution, and on the character of its leader, that Lucile remains a two-dimensional

[1] Page references are to this reprint, a paperback published by Odhams Press in their Beacon Books series, now out of print.

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figure—less alive even than such minor characters as Savrola's political lieutenants or Molara's officers. Because of this the reader's interest follows the author's, and the triangle never really comes alive as a dramatic situation.

The strategy of both sides in the revolution is coherent and clearly worked out. The moment-to-moment fighting, both by land and sea, is described in such detail that it takes up a substantial part of the book. In view of the youth and background of the author—and when one remembers when the book was written, and thinks of others in the same *genre*—it is striking that the fighting is not glamorised. Contrary to the usual pretence of war stories, both sides behave with equal inhumanity, the "good" as much as the "bad." We are told of

> "that cruel devil that lurks in the hearts of men and is awakened by bloodshed and danger,"
>
> "the hungry lust of killing rose in his [the hero's] heart."
>
> "The retiring soldiers left their wounded on the ground, and these the soldiers bayoneted savagely."
>
> "They were nearly all killed eventually, for everyone's blood was up and it was a waste of time to ask for quarter."
>
> "'Do you suppose they cut up the wounded?' 'Every one of them, I should think; they were like wolves at the end.'"
>
> "Suddenly there was a very strange sound, half thud, half smash. Tiro, shrinking swiftly to the left, just avoided being splashed with blood and other physical details. The Sergeant had been killed by a bullet. . . ."
>
> "Several tried to drag with them the wounded, of which there already were a few more; these cried out in pain and begged to be left alone."
>
> "The back and left side of the skull behind the ear was blown away, and the force of the explosion, probably at close quarters, had cracked all the bones of the face so that, as the skin was whole, it looked like broken china in a sponge bag."

In the author's attitude to fighting there is a curious ambivalence. The sharpness of detail in these descriptions and the absence of romantic humbug make it clear that he has experienced it. He is obviously fascinated by it, perhaps in love with it. Yet he is aware of its horrors and the way it brutalises the human beings who take part in it. Perhaps the key to this mixed attitude is to be found in this (p. 177):

> Out in the streets there had been vivid scenes, hot blood, and excitement. The dangers of war, and the occasion of close and involved fighting, had given many opportunities for acts of devotion and brutality. The brave man had displayed his courage; the cruel had indulged his savagery; all the intermediate types had been thrilled with the business of the moment and there had scarce been time for any but involuntary terror.

In other words in mortal combat a man lives at the top of his bent, functions at the height of his powers; this is the time he feels, and shows, his full measure. It is therefore the only effective means to self-discovery and self-realisation. Hence, paradoxically, it contains the secret of life.

> When the notes of life ring false, men should correct them by referring to the tuning-fork of death. It is when that clear menacing tone is heard that the love of life grows keenest in the human heart.

When Savrola comes under fire for the first time he is a changed man. "The blood was in his cheeks and his eyes sparkled; all that was reckless in him, all his love of excitement, stirred in his veins. Tiro looked at him amazed." This attitude to mortal danger is, to say the least of it, not typical of politicians.

BECAUSE PEOPLE are more fully themselves when in danger than in other circumstances the author examines his characters with particular interest whenever they face a crisis. The most striking of his assumptions is that in adversity everyone puts his chief trust in something abstract—some ritual or code or body of belief. The code may be a trivial one, as in the case of Miguel, the President's Secretary, who in time of crisis always takes refuge in "the official manner", that suave composure "which always strengthened his mean soul." As for Admiral De Mello, the rough sailor, "his manners were invariably improved by the proximity of danger or the consciousness of power." When Molara's cause is in ruins and all hope gone, and Colonel Sorrento comes to tell him that the only thing left is to die fighting, "Sorrento saluted with much ceremony. He had only his military code to believe in and he took firm hold of that." Bettine, the old nurse who has looked after Savrola since his childhood, escapes into the simple domestic routine appropriate to an elderly female of the servant class: for others as well as herself she produces "material consolations . . . soup, custards, and the like" . . . "in the hopes of killing care with comfort." Lucile helps spasmodically, but for her "the material consolations of the old nurse" are "bathos." Lucile's effective consolations are spiritual. She prays "at intervals." She is the only character in the book who actually practises her religion at the critical time. But even her religion consists not of a clear belief in a personal God but merely of the vague emotional miasma appropriate to women and children. "She prayed—prayed convulsively, sending her entreaties into space in the hope that they would not fall on unheeding ears."

Savrola is the only adventure story I can re-

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member in which the author assumes it necessary to fit out every single one of his characters with a theoretical basis for the endurance and courage in dangerous situations that such books are naturally about. In other books characters are brave or rash or cautious or cowardly according to their lights, and there is an end of it —usually none of them, let alone all of them, sustains himself by reference to an abstract system of values. In itself the belief that people must have a religious faith or its equivalent is not surprising; it is common enough. Only a few days before writing these words I heard a famous preacher say "Every man must have a religion, and if he doesn't get the right one he'll get the wrong one." This is an assumption continually expressed in pulpit and popular journalism. But presumably those who utter it with sincerity could do so only if two conditions were fulfilled: first, they must have such a faith themselves, for if their statement did not apply to themselves they would know it to be false; and second, they must believe that this faith ultimately justifies itself, for otherwise they could not regard it as indispensable. Now the extraordinary thing in the case of *Savrola* is that although the author clearly believes that other people do have such a faith, he does not regard it as justified, and he does not have one himself.

LET ME TAKE these two points in order. The quotations above show how the several characters are sustained through danger by their different codes and beliefs. These beliefs serve them well enough, but only so long as they are not put to the *ultimate* test. None of the characters at those points is facing instant death. When one of them is actually on the brink of oblivion (which is what death is taken to be, as I shall show in a moment) his faith becomes like paper in the mouth—whether it be a conventional "religion" like Tiro's or a deeply considered and thought-through "philosophy" like Savrola's.[2]

When Tiro tries to escape from the palace by passing over the street-fighting on the telephone wires,

> death seemed near and terrible. His religion, like that of many soldiers, was of little help; it was merely a jumble of formulas seldom repeated, hardly understood, never investigated, and a hopeful, but unauthorised, belief that it would be well with him if he did his duty like a gentleman. He had no philosophy; he felt only that he was risking all that he had, and for what he was uncertain.

Savrola, when Molara was about to blow his head off with a pistol at point-blank range, "anticipated the blow full in the face; and beyond he saw nothing—annihilation—black, black night.... He tried to think, to take one grip of his philosophy or faith before the plunge; but his physical sensations were too violent."

So much for the use of religion or philosophy in the moment of supreme need, even for the hero. In the last analysis Savrola is a pessimist. Of a Supreme Being he says: "It is not scientifically or logically necessary to assume one," and he does not assume one. When Lucile suggests that we shall learn the answer to the great riddle when we die he replies: "If I thought that I should kill myself tonight out of irresistible curiosity." And when he does come face to face with instant death he sees, in the words just quoted, "nothing—annihilation—black, black night."

The other characters face death in the same terms. To Molara it is "the approaching darkness." To Tiro it is the loss of Everything. The author says of Moret, Savrola's right-hand man: "His was not the courage of the Stoic; he had not schooled himself to contemplate the shock of dissolution;" and when he is killed the author writes: "All his ambitions, his enthusiasm, his hopes had come to a dead stop." Furthermore the author avoids making any mention of God even when to do so would be natural. When Lucile prayed, "She spoke no name; but the gods, who are omniscient, may have guessed with sardonic smiles that she prayed for the victory of the rebel she loved over her husband, the President." Another of her prayers is described as being directed, vaguely, at "a merciful Providence." Savrola is twice described as "waving his hat at Fate."

SUCH PHILOSOPHY AS Savrola has is mostly a half-baked mess of Hegelianism. (Hegel is one of the authors whose books, we are specifically told on page 35, stood on his shelves.) It is expounded in full in Chapter VIII. "In the beginning there existed two factors, matter animated by the will to live, and the eternal idea.... It is to the interplay and counter-action of these two that all development, that all forms of life are due." These dialectical premises are combined with popular Darwinism and speculative anthropology to yield the conclusion that the European races are intrinsically superior to all others. Even

> when we have degenerated, as we must eventually degenerate, when we have lost our intrinsic superiority, and other races according to the natural law advance to take our place, we shall fall back upon these weapons [the modern weapons of war which Western man's technology has given him].... The effete and trembling

[2] This distinction of Churchill's between a religion and a philosophy is made more than once: philosophy seems to mean facing the facts of life and death and coming to terms with them, while religion involves belief in a Divine Being.

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> European will sweep from the earth by scientific machinery the valiant savages who assail him.

All this is set against a background of cosmic pessimism, for these developments occupy only the period between the earth's being too hot to support life and its being too cold. "The cooling process would continue; the perfect development of life would end in death; the whole solar system, the whole universe itself, would one day be cold and lifeless as a burnt-out firework."

It is not merely the individual who ends in oblivion. The whole of life, in all forms and "in every world," is due for total extinction. This literally godless philosophy is one of purposeless materialism; everything, even value, is regarded as an emanation of matter. "I believe that the superiority of fitness over relative unfitness is one of the great laws of matter. I include all kinds of fitness—moral, physical, mathematical." When Savrola tells Lucile that "it is only a question of time before the planet becomes unfitted to support life on its surface" she says:

> "But you said that fitness must ultimately triumph."
>
> "Over relative unfitness, yes. But decay will involve all, victors and vanquished. The fire of life will die out, the spirit of vitality become extinct."
>
> "In this world perhaps."
>
> "In every world. All the universe is cooling—dying that is—and as it cools, life for a spell becomes possible on the surfaces of its spheres, and plays strange antics. And then the end comes; the universe dies and is sepulchred in the cold darkness of ultimate negation."

THE ASSUMPTIONS of the author about his characters and those of the characters themselves fit into a single pattern: there is no faith that will not crumble at the onslaught of death, death is annihilation, and there is no God. This is indeed a philosophy of ultimate negation. And it raises a question which is immediately put by Lucile. (Savrola's answer opens new vistas.)

> "To what purpose then are all our efforts?"
>
> "God knows," said Savrola, cynically; "but I can imagine that the drama would not be an uninteresting one to watch."

DRAMA: that word is the key to what is most important in the book. Is there anything that can sustain a man in the face of death? Philosophy cannot and religion cannot. The answer, curiously enough, is self-dramatisation —simple, irreducible pride. Our author believes this to be common. "It often happens that, when men are convinced that they have to die, a desire to bear themselves well and to leave life's stage with dignity conquers all other sensations." So, for example, Molara walks voluntarily out of his palace to be riddled with bullets by the mob. "'Here I am,' he said. The crowd stared. For a moment he stood there in the bright sunlight.... He was bare-headed and drew himself up in his full height. For a moment there was silence." The dramatic effect here is of the essence. In the end it is self-consciousness, a sense of role, determination to cut a figure, that sustain a man beyond the point where his faith, be it philosophy or religion, ceases to be of use.

> Molara remembered that, after all, he had lived famous among men. He had been almost a king. All the eyes of the world would be turned to the scene about to be enacted; distant countries would know, distant ages would reflect. It was worth while dying bravely, since die he must.

We have come to what the author thinks motivates a great man, in life as in death—his sense of his own role. But only a great man—and by that he means an ultimate leader, a man with no boss. There are two such men in the book, Savrola and Molara, each at the top of his own pyramid of power, and both are specifically referred to by the author as "great men." (Since Molara is morally iniquitous it is clear that "great" has no moral connotation but is defined solely in terms of power.) All other characters in the book are of necessity subordinates, or, in the case of the women, spectators, and it is very striking that the leaders are motivated differently from them. When Savrola reflected on his life he thought:

> Was it worth it? The struggle, the labour, the constant rush of affairs, the sacrifice of so many things that make life easy, or pleasant—for what? A people's good! That, he could not disguise from himself, was rather the direction than the cause of his efforts. Ambition was the motive force, and he was powerless to resist it.

He, like Molara, is conscious of the eyes of the world and of history. At the beginning of the revolution he reflected that "if he lived, his life would henceforth be within the province of the historian." And at the end, when he saw Molara's bullet-smashed body, "a sense of maddening irritation shook his whole system. All this must fall on his name; what would Europe think, what would the world say?" So our great men, Savrola and Molara, are driven along by this special force, while their subordinates and womenfolk are sustained by religion, etiquette, or cooking.

Now we are at the heart of the split morality of the book, and possibly of the author. Now we can see why he believes that other people's lives are guided by a religious faith although his own is not. He identifies himself with the natural leaders. One is reminded of Winston Churchill's remark to Lady Violet Bonham Carter at their

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very first meeting in 1906, when she was a girl of 19: "We are all worms, but I do believe that I am a glow-worm."[3] For these natural leaders things are different. They "play a great game in the face of all the world, to struggle for those ambitions which form the greater part of man's interest in life." They are swept forward by a sense of role which they are "powerless to resist." Such human beings are rare, and the rest who do not have this driving force, must, the author assumes, have something else to give their lives meaning. So he conscientiously attributes to them codes, rituals, religions, whatever he thinks will suit them. But these faiths, like the people for whom they are appropriate, fail to meet the standards the author sets for himself and hence for the leaders in his book with whom he identifies himself.

MANY PEOPLE have spoken of a curiously prophetic quality in the book, but I do not think it is prophetic, any more than *Mein Kampf* is prophetic. The young Churchill simply presented the sort of man he conceived himself to be, doing the sort of things he would like to do, and so strong was his sense of direction and purpose (not to mention his ability) that he went on and did them. It is not at all curious that Churchill's subsequent career matched Savrola's, the less so in that, even as an ambitious twenty-three-year-old, Churchill had a realistic understanding of the cost of success, and knew that it must be paid for in advance.

> Would you rise in the world? You must work while others amuse themselves. Are you desirous of a reputation for courage? You must risk your life. Would you be strong morally or physically? You must resist temptations. All this is paying in advance; that is prospective finance. Observe the other side of the picture; the bad things are paid for afterwards... as surely as the headache on Sunday morning follows the debauch of Saturday night, as an idle youth is requited by a barren age, as a gluttonous appetite promotes an ungainly paunch.

As the son of an ambitious politician and cabinet minister the author had known all his life what most people never learn, that a dynamic leader is in a perpetual state of overwork, and that this involves sacrifice of his private and family life. "Thus it is that great men enjoy the power they risk their lives to gain and often meet their deaths to hold."

However, the one point in the book that does seem surprisingly prophetic, and which in view of the author's subsequent career is most moving, is Savrola's rejection by his own people before the final victory but at the moment it is assured.

> While victory was still in the balance he had been indispensable; now they were prepared to go on alone.

This is typical of the way—despite the stilted morality of the characters and their artificial dialogue—the author is always realistic about the things that interest *him*, which are chiefly fighting, ambition, and political power. He knows their limitations and terrors, and he knows their price. He also knows the gifts on which success can be built. First of these for the hero with whom he identifies himself comes oratory. He calls Savrola's eloquence "the wand of the magician," and makes that the title of a chapter. He sees clearly how for a man like him, greatness as an orator is the most important stepping-stone to supreme political leadership and may even be the basis for a whole career. At one point there is nearly the implication that any situation, however bad, can be put to rights by a carefully prepared speech. In Savrola's speeches, as in the later Churchill's, rational argument has virtually no place.

> Amid the smoke he saw a peroration, which would cut deep into the hearts of a crowd; a high thought, a fine simile, expressed in that correct diction which is comprehensible even to the most illiterate, and appeals to the most simple; something to lift their minds from the material cares of life and to awake sentiment.... The sound would please their ears, the sense improve and stimulate their minds. What a game it was! His brain contained the cards he had to play, the world the stakes he played for.

The book can be said to contain innumerable vignettes of the author's later self, especially as war leader. "In that scene of confusion and indecision he looked magnificent. His very presence imparted a feeling of confidence to his followers" (p. 32). We see him reading all the newspapers every morning in bed before he gets up (p. 40). We see him scribbling pungent comments on the official papers submitted to him (p. 42). In the crucial moment of the fighting, when everything lies in the balance, he calmly takes a nap (p. 191). The author even sees that his hero's supreme gift is not for original political thought, of which he produces little or none, but for personifying and articulating mass-thoughts and mass-emotions. "Do you think I am what I am, because I have changed all those minds, or because I best express their views? Am I their master or their slave? Believe me, I have no illusions."

ONE OF THE THEMES running through the book is the precariousness of authority, the realisation that as soon as those over whom power is exercised cease to acknowledge it, it is dead. At the

[8] *Winston Churchill as I Knew Him*. Collins, 45s.

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very beginning of the revolution the garrison of Turga "deserted to the invaders, having first shot their officers." When the *Fortuna* is shelled the sailors seek protection in the armoured part of the ship, "nor could their officers induce them to return." A whole chapter, with the ironical title *The Loyalty of the Army*, is devoted to describing a nightmarish scene in which the entire force in the capital defies its officers by silently ignoring their orders.[4]

POLITICAL POWER is shown to be as precarious as military authority. The whole book, after all, is about the downfall of President Molara. Savrola, in his very hour of triumph, discovers that "he was losing his hold over the Party" and has to flee the country to save his life. The position of a man in authority is never secure because it is always possible for the institutional basis of his leadership to be destroyed through no fault of his. When that happens the only thing left with which he can carry authority is the force of his own personality. The author shows a sensitive awareness of this ultimate relationship of personality and power, and of how in the last resort all leadership rests on strength of character. This is no doubt one of the reasons why the *natural* leader is presented as a sort of superman, a creature morally different from the people he leads.

One of the author's implicit criticisms of the army is that it offers no scope for this natural leadership—that at all levels the chief virtues are conforming and obeying orders. Even Colonel Sorrento, the Military Chief of Police and, under Molara, commander of the whole army, is described as "one of those soldiers, not an uncommon type, who fear little but independent responsibility." The author's picture of his fellow officers is epitomised in Lieutenant Tiro, of the same age as himself, who "had been brought up in the most correct regimental ideas; the people (by which he meant the mob) were 'swine', their leaders were the same, with an adjective prefixed; democratic institutions, Parliament, and such like, were all 'rot'." The fact that the author takes care to tell us that these were the most correct regimental ideas indicates that they were received by most of the officers of the 4th (Queen's Own) Hussars in whose company he lived for four happy years.

In spite of this one sees why the years were happy. Tiro is an almost wholly likeable character: boyish, eager, honest, naïve, courageous, impulsive. He loves "the green country, the glinting lances, the crack of the rifles, and all the interest and joy of war." He covers Moret's body to show his sense of outrage that his Colonel had shot him. He even comes in the end to respect Savrola, to be his companion in danger and to kill his assailant. Both the author and the reader like him and approve him. But the author is well aware of his limitations. His life revolves almost entirely round war and polo. He despises politics and politicians. He is uneducated and uncultured. We know from other sources how accurate a picture this is of the young officers of seventy years ago. It is little wonder that the author left the army shortly after writing this book.

THESE are perhaps the most interesting of the self-revelations in *Savrola*. But there are many more. For example the conception of Socialists is that of Sapper and the strip-cartoon: they are "of foreign aspect," wear dark suits, speak "in low tones," and have Central European names —all the characters in the book have Romance names except the two Socialists, and they are called Karl Kreutze and Strelitz. They constitute a Secret Society; they advocate a community of wives as well as of goods, and believe in dynamiting their political enemies yet are cowards themselves.

Almost everyone in the book who is not a professional soldier is a coward. The author expresses his contempt for the faint-heartedness of the "fat burgesses." Politicians who are not also soldiers are thought to have no guts by Molara ("All mere politicians, he said to himself, were physical cowards") and by Tiro ("He had always heard that politicians took care of their skins, and sent others to fight their battles"). Even the author tells us that Savrola is jealous of Tiro's military experience ("Savrola felt as if he had looked into a new world, a world of ardent, reckless, warlike youth. He was himself young enough to feel a certain jealousy. This boy had seen what he had not; he possessed an experience which taught him lessons Savrola had never learned. Their lives had been different; but one day perhaps he would open this strange book of war, and by the vivid light of personal danger read the lessons it contained"). It can scarcely be coincidence that the author was himself a soldier-politician. This and other subjects could be pursued. We could examine the author's ambivalent attitude towards newspapers, of which he is contemptuous yet whose importance he overrates. (There is an excellent satirical description of *The Times* on page 40.) He is contemptuous of the common people. As for women, all they do is weep, watch and wait, and he expressly says that this is their role.

[4] When one remembers that the author was himself an army officer at the time of writing the book one may detect some anxiety in this insight.

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SAVROLA is a gold-mine of insights into the buried assumptions carried by Winston Churchill into adult life. The young man we see behind the book is generous, intelligent, and likeable—in other words he has a great deal in common with Tiro. But unlike Tiro he is broad in outlook as well as zestful in approach. His great defect is that his ultimate concern is with appearances. When faced with any action or decision the supreme question for him is not "Is this right?" but "How will it look?" And, even though he is concerned with how it will look not to the Joneses but to future historians, the false values are the same false values. The book is all the more worth exploring for these insights because its author's character, though he later grew to greatness in the true sense of the word, remained basically similar throughout his life. The extent to which this is so was—in the light of *Savrola*—penetratingly displayed by Clement Attlee in the obituary he wrote (*Observer*, January 31st, 1965) of Winston Churchill nearly seventy years on:

> If there was one thing that marked him off from the comparable figures in history, it was his characteristic way of standing back and looking at himself—and his country—as he believed history would. He was always, in effect, asking himself, "How will I look if I do this or that?"

The Art of Conjecture

BERTRAND DE JOUVENEL has for some years now been trying to persuade political theorists and others to take an interest in the future. In a lively and very readable book on *L'Art de la Conjecture*[1] he sets out to refute the familiar objection that the future is "unknowable." Jouvenel agrees that the future is in the strict sense of knowledge unknowable; but he maintains that more or less well-reasoned surmises about the future can be made, and that in the swiftly changing world we live in, they should be made. Jouvenel argues that the future is neither totally closed nor absolutely open; what "fans out," as he puts it, before us is a kind of *Spielraum*, an area within which a certain range of possibilities lies. There are numerous but not unlimited paths before us; and each of these possible paths can be partially explored in imagination by the man who has sufficient information about past and present trends.

Jouvenel has not found it easy to choose words for what he is proposing. A word he uses quite often is *prévision*, but he is clearly uneasy about it. Maupertuis seems to have been the first to use the word in its modern sense in his *Lettres* of 1752, where he claimed that the scientist could know the future by *la prévision* precisely as he could know the past by means of another faculty, *le souvenir*. Voltaire made short work of this claim; he pointed out that God alone could *know* the future, and thus that God alone had the faculty of *prévision*; the best a man could attain was *prévoyance*, which is not a seeing of what will happen but an attempt to envisage what may happen. Jouvenel is concerned with what Voltaire called *prévoyance*, only the difference is that he wants to have it done systematically. A word Jouvenel has taken up, and already made famous, is *futuribles*.[2] By this he means "possible futures," and the emphasis is on the plural because Jouvenel does not think one can speak of *a* future, but *futures*, some perhaps more likely to come about than others, and some certainly preferable to others. Thus, while the old notion of Maupertuis and his kind that the future is fixed entailed a denial of free will, Jouvenel's theory of "possible futures" or *futuribles*, restores human choice and decision to a prime place.

THEORY HERE IS not remote from action. For example, if it can be reasonably surmised that cities which ignore the effects of air pollution will suffer from a radical increase in respiratory diseases, then people who foresee that possible future might be expected to prepare for themselves a different kind of future. There is, of course, the problem here of what William James called "attention." People avoid doing what they would do if they thought about it, by simply not thinking about it. There is thus a certain kind of unwillingness to probe the future, if that probing means calling to people's minds the price that will one day have to be paid for today's slackness or today's pleasure. Jouvenel's enterprise must therefore reckon with popular as well as with academic resistance.

Much of the academic opposition might stem from the now rather old-fashioned inductivist belief that science is a purely empirical or fact-collecting activity; more sophisticated methodologists, who stress the importance of imagination in science, ought to be more sympathetic;

[1] *L'Art de la Conjecture*. By BERTRAND DE JOUVENEL (Monaco, Editions du Rocher, 19.50 francs).

[2] "Futuribles" is the title of a series of essays published in French by the Bulletin S.E.D.E.I.S., 205 Boulevard St. Germain, Paris. Some of them have been published in English by F.E.R.I.S., 132 Rue de Lausanne, Geneva.

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and although Jouvenel's *la conjecture* may not be quite the same as Sir Karl Popper's "conjecture," Popper's work may have created a climate more favourable to Jouvenel's theory. Jouvenel certainly does not diminish the importance of factual data, of detailed knowledge of past and present circumstances as a basis of forecasting. And he insists that the "work of the imagination" for which he pleads is real work, and not play.

He does not care at all for "game theory." He points out that the world of social affairs is something very different from the artificial world of a game of chance. With a game of chance, we know exhaustively in advance every situation which can occur without knowing at all what is going to turn up on the next throw or deal. The player's ignorance is quite different from the ignorance which prevails in the realm of social affairs. Here there is no exhaustive advance knowledge of all possible future situations, or even any advance knowledge of any single one. To construct a picture of one possible future situation which may follow from the present is one piece of work for the imagination, and constructing an alternative possibility is another piece of work; and we could go on with this work, constructing more and more possible futures without ever having enumerated all the possible futures, since the future may be profoundly affected by something which does not figure in the present state of affairs.

An example of this comes from J. L. Favier, who used in the eighteenth century (not the *xv^e siècle* as an unfortunate misprint has it) an expression Jouvenel adopts: *la conjecture raisonnée*. Favier, an expert on foreign affairs, drew up a document for Louis XV on the future balance of power in Europe. Favier's conjectures proved wrong, because he did not count on the French Revolution, which introduced entirely new factors into the balance of power in Europe. Jouvenel wants conjectures to be reasoned, but he does not believe that they can be so fully reasoned as to take account of every possible eventuality. He also divides the field between specialists. He does not have much faith in comprehensive visions of the future world, like Orwell's. For Jouvenel a *conjecture raisonnée* is a conjecture made about a certain limited aspect of the future by an expert in that domain.

FOR THE PAST four years or so, Jouvenel has been organising under the auspices of the *Société d'Études et de Documentation Économiques, Industrielles et Sociales* in Paris, of which he is president, the publication of some forty or fifty essays on different aspects of the future by different specialists; he has also held a number of *tables rondes* as a basis for the kind of *forum prévisionnel* he would like to see set up. Jouvenel describes this *forum* as a sort of market place in which speculation could be confronted, discussed, criticised and combined so that intelligible images of possible futures could be developed. Again, he claims that his proposal is of more than theoretical interest. He sees it as a means "to revitalise government by discussion."

It must be admitted that what now goes by the name of "planning" is very different from what Jouvenel has in mind. The "planning" we have is something that is done behind the closed doors of government bureaucracies. Jouvenel thinks that by means of his "forecasting forums," programmes could be devised and shaped in public. Once people can see more clearly what the alternatives are, they can make their choice, and so try to actualise one of the more desirable—or less undesirable—of the "possible futures." This he thinks is a form of planning which would increase, and not diminish, men's liberty.

Although Jouvenel has written this book in French, it ought to attract a wide public. His style is very straightforward and clear, so that no one should find it difficult. He is well known as a political philosopher because of his books on *Power* and *Sovereignty*; but he is also a delightful writer. He puts one in mind sometimes of Montesquieu, sometimes of Tocqueville, always civilised and stimulating; and he keeps alive a tradition of French political theory which the influence of Auguste Comte has almost, but not quite, destroyed.

Maurice Cranston

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International Commentary

America's Asian Commitment

By Richard Lowenthal

IN VIET NAM, the United States is now involved in a full-scale war on the mainland of Asia. President Johnson's administration had not planned to fight this kind of war; it has drifted into it under the pressure of events, *i.e.*, of the unforeseen consequences of earlier American policies in the area. Yet having come to the parting of the ways, the present American leaders have deliberately set a new course in world affairs and developed a doctrine for its justification: they have not only increased their stake in Viet Nam, but have assumed a wider, long-term commitment to the military containment of China. It is this crucial decision that is now shaping the American response to the new international constellation created by the Sino-Soviet conflict, shifting the centre of gravity of American foreign policy and changing its methods—with possibly fateful consequences for every part of the world.

In trying to analyse the causes and effects of this major change in the official American outlook, we shall first seek to distinguish between the origins of the U.S. involvement in Viet Nam and the new concepts that have led President Johnson and his advisers to persist in this involvement and extend it, and then examine the validity of the latter.

PROFESSOR *Richard Lowenthal's commentary this month continues the discussion of Viet Nam and Western policy which was begun in the August* ENCOUNTER *by Irving Kristol and Anthony Hartley. (See also the correspondence in this issue, p. 90, and Letter* from Viet Nam *by P. J. Honey in* ENCOUNTER, *December 1963).*

LEAVING THE fringe groups of right-wing extremists and fellow-travellers aside, there have long been three main positions in the American discussion on Cold War Strategy. On one side, a school most effectively represented by Walter Lippmann has considered that the United States should limit its commitments to the defence of areas of direct importance to its own security. On the other hand, a tendency expressed most clearly in the practice of the late John Foster Dulles has been to seek military alliances with anti-Communist governments everywhere, regardless of whether the governments were popular and stable or whether the people felt threatened by Communist attack. In the middle, the concept followed—with occasional deviations—under Presidents Truman and Kennedy has been to accept the world-wide nature of the conflict with the Communist powers and to seek to compete with them everywhere for political influence, but to give military backing only to politically viable governments that requested it against a genuine threat. My own opinion, as previously expressed in these pages,[1] has always been that both the "cut commitments" school of Lippmann and the pactomania of Dulles looked at the problem in too exclusively military terms, underestimating the ideological and political nature of the conflict: that the former, if applied, would have led to unnecessary retreats while the latter did lead to unnecessary defeats for the United States, as weak allied governments crumbled in Iraq and Laos; and that the "middle course" of a world-wide political struggle with military backing where there was a sound popular basis corresponded best to the realities of the situation.

The decision taken by the United States in 1954 not to sign the Geneva agreement that ended the Indo-China war, and subsequently to back the South Vietnamese government of Ngo Dinh Diem in refusing the all-Vietnamese elec-

[1] "The Balance and the Mission," ENCOUNTER, August 1961.

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tions proposed in that agreement, like the parallel U.S. initiative in creating the SEATO pact, were, of course, conspicuous examples of the Dulles policy. At the time, Viet Nam appeared as a uniquely unfavourable terrain for a political struggle against Communism. It was then—and has remained to this day—the only country in the world whose people had won freedom from colonial rule under Communist leadership. Ho Chi-minh's Communists and their front were the only major organised political force in the country; in the South the existence of several private armies, ranging from armed sects to armed gangs, seemed to augur ill for Diem's chances of building up a viable state.

Yet as it turned out (and as a very few American experts predicted at the time) Diem had a chance. He was a Nationalist of known integrity who had not collaborated with the defeated colonial power, and the private armies quickly surrendered to his authority once their French backers had withdrawn. He succeeded at first in creating a peaceful and orderly, if authoritarian state, and a large influx of refugees from the Communist North (many of them Diem's Catholic co-religionists) testified to its comparative attraction. It was this initial success of the Southern régime, combined with the moral impression created by the flight of hundreds of thousands, that caused many Western observers who had been critical of the U.S. attitude at Geneva now to endorse the American backing for the South. In the United States, it was henceforth accepted by the middle-of-the-roaders as well as by the supporters of Dulles and became a bi-partisan policy.

As the years went by, however, the weaknesses of Diem and his régime became increasingly apparent. Conceiving of government in terms of a benevolent autocracy, he alienated the modernistic intellectuals; he could not create a substantial political force in his support and would not tolerate one in opposition. He understood the need for agrarian reform, but not for popular participation in carrying it out: it had to be an orderly, bureaucratic operation—yet there were not enough administrators of the independence and integrity needed to enforce it against the land-owners. As suppressed criticism turned into conspiracies, Diem came to rely increasingly on the political police, headed by his brother Nhu, and to distrust all critical advice. This deterioration of the régime accelerated as the Communists, sensing the chance offered by the régime's increasing isolation, resumed their guerrilla activities.

THERE CAN BE NO DOUBT that the decision to restart the civil war was taken by Hanoi; but it was carried out in the first place by Communists who had always remained in the South, biding their time. Supplies and returning cadres from the North certainly helped, particularly after the road through Laos had been opened. But more decisive for their success was the active support of part of the peasantry and the lack of equally active support for the government in many areas. Six years after the creation of independent South Viet Nam, the Communists were still the only solidly organised political force in the country. That was the measure of Diem's failure.

By that time, the Kennedy administration had come in. It realised that things were going badly in Viet Nam, but also that—in contrast to Laos—there was still much determined opposition to the Communists, and that the army was really fighting the Vietcong. It concluded that aid should be stepped up and reforms be pressed on Diem at the same time. When Diem became increasingly stubborn, he was finally warned that he risked losing American support. It was at this moment that a military coup—not the first that had been attempted—overthrew him, and that Diem and Nhu were killed. Despite the shock at the murder, the change of leadership was welcomed not only in the United States, but by Western democratic opinion generally in the hope that now the way would be open for a more broadly based régime. "No Nhus is good news," wrote the *Economist*. Yet within a short time, the instability of the new military régime with its intense personal rivalries revealed the truth: the fall of Diem had further weakened what limited political legitimacy the government of South Viet Nam possessed.

By 1964, the civil war in Viet Nam had been politically lost by the opponents of the Communists—as clearly as the civil war on the Chinese mainland had been lost when President Truman decided that further aid for Chiang Kai-shek's forces had become useless. There was no indigenous force left strong enough to stabilise the situation, let alone beat the Vietcong. Hanoi, now under predominant Chinese influence, was stepping up its support for the Vietcong in the expectation of imminent military victory. To President Johnson fell the bitter choice between accepting political defeat while trying to limit and disguise it by negotiation, or ordering large-scale American military intervention in the hope of thus reversing the political verdict of the civil war. It is hardly surprising that he hesitated until the American elections had given him presidential authority in his own right. When in February 1965 he first authorised the bombing of North Viet Nam (in conditions other than direct retaliation for specific North Vietnamese attacks on U.S. forces), his action

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appeared to many critics as an impulsive improvisation. In fact, the opening of graduated hostilities against North Viet Nam turned out to be the first act of a fully considered new policy of direct, large-scale military intervention.

IT HAS TAKEN time for the full implications and the real motives of this decision to become clear. The frequent complaint of American critics that the administration is misinforming the people does not, on the whole, have a basis in the reporting of actual events in Viet Nam, which by now is reasonably truthful. It is due to the widespread feeling that the political *aims* of American intervention have been obscured rather than clarified by a flood of contradictory official statements. To sort out the substance from the verbiage, it is best to start by considering the one alternative to direct intervention that was still open to Johnson at the time.

As I have suggested, that alternative would have been to seek negotiation on the implied basis of accepting political defeat in Viet Nam. This would have meant a conference in which the "National Liberation Front of South Viet Nam," the political arm of the Vietcong, would be represented as an official partner, while representation of the Saigon government would have to be insisted on at the same time; the procedural problems involved are familiar from the Laos conference of 1962. The outcome would at best be a coalition government including the Communists—again as in Laos, but probably in proportions more favourable to them. American and North Vietnamese troops would then have to be withdrawn, which in the case of the latter would be difficult to check, whatever control arrangements could be agreed on. Within a limited time after the end of the fighting, this government would then hold elections, presumably followed by a plebiscite on unification with the North; and, given the outcome of the fighting and the power relations resulting from it, it seems safe to expect that unification would be approved. In short, the Communist aim of a single Communist Viet Nam would be achieved; but it would be achieved not by military victory, but as a result of formally democratic procedures, with a delay that might permit saving the active opponents of the Communists from their revenge, and in a framework that would reduce the dependence of a Communist Viet Nam on China and might even take the form of an international agreement on its military neutrality. This, on the whole, seems to have been the kind of solution which General de Gaulle had in mind when he called for an international conference on Viet Nam—except that his manner of proposing it seemed to suggest that it could be achieved without American consent.

President Johnson's refusal to envisage this kind of solution is not based on a substantially different estimate of the present relation of forces inside South Viet Nam. Its motives are to be found in a new concept of the importance of Viet Nam in the wider conflict between the United States and Communist China. The administration believes, first, that acceptance of political defeat would constitute a surrender to indirect (and increasingly direct) military aggression against "the independent nation of South Viet Nam," conducted by Hanoi and master-minded by Communist China; second, that such a surrender would undermine confidence in American protection and encourage similar indirect Chinese aggression throughout South-East Asia, leading to its conversion into an uncontested Chinese power sphere, with incalculable repercussions on India and Japan; third, that such a surrender is not necessary, because the United States has the military strength to hold on indefinitely at least to a coastal strip of South Viet Nam while inflicting severe damage on the North, thus proving to both Peking and its neighbours that "indirect aggression" by civil war is no more successful than open aggression of the Korean type and that the United States will stand by its Asian commitments at any cost. The primary purpose of the American direct intervention, then, is no longer to "help the Vietnamese people to help themselves," even though the President never tires of repeating this. It is to ensure the containment of Chinese Communist expansion throughout South-East Asia by the long-term commitment of American military force—in whatever quantity and for whatever duration may be needed to achieve the aim.

IT IS FOR THE SAKE of this commitment, adopted without advance consultation with America's European allies and never fully explained to the American people, that the Johnson administration has decided to take on the main burden of the war in Viet Nam. It is on the basis of this concept that it has opened graduated hostilities against North Viet Nam without either a previous appeal to the United Nations or a constitutional declaration of war. I believe that this concept is based on a false analysis of the conditions for successful guerrilla warfare and of the nature of the danger threatening from Communist China, on a misjudgment of the priorities of American national interest and of the limits of American military power, and on a failure to appreciate the moral basis of Western strength in the contest with Com-

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munist dictatorship; and that, unless this policy is corrected in time, it may do incalculable harm to the cohesion of the Western alliance, to the world position of the United States, and even to its internal stability.

THE EVIDENCE is conclusive that "indirect aggression" from Hanoi—orders and cadres, slogans and supplies—has played a substantial part in the Vietcong campaign; it is not convincing that its role has been decisive for the Vietcong's success. A guerrilla uprising is a political war, and its outcome depends on a combination of political and military factors. The Communist guerrillas in Malaya could not have been put down without tough fighting, but neither could they have been defeated if Malaya had not become independent, or if the bulk of its Chinese population had felt sufficiently disaffected to support them in the long run. The Hukbalahaps owed their ultimate defeat not to the geographical isolation of the Philippines, but to their political isolation by Magsaysay's reforms. By contrast, the Chinese Communists did not owe their success against the Japanese and their final victory over the Kuomintang to Soviet aid, but to the popular hatred for the former and to the political disintegration of the latter. The decisive cause of the Vietcong's success in South Viet Nam has not been the aid from the North, but the absence of an alternative, of any other cohesively organised and popularly based political force: in guerrilla warfare, you cannot beat something with nothing.

The importance of this question lies not in fixing the blame, but in the light thrown by past experience on the future chances of the Chinese to start "wars of liberation" in other neighbouring countries by "pushing a button"—by starting, say, a subversive radio station near the frontier and sending in some trained agents. The anxiety of the Thailand government about the beginnings of Chinese-sponsored guerrilla action among the tribes of the North-east is said to have been an important factor in the U.S. administration's decision to "stop the rot" by direct military intervention. Would not success in South Viet Nam encourage the multiplication of such activities? Yet in 1948–50, when the Communists were winning their much greater victory in China itself, the "push-button" strategy was tried by them in South India, Burma, Malaya, Indonesia, and the Philippines and failed everywhere. Only Ho Chi-minh's rising against the French, which had started earlier, for serious indigenous causes and with a broad popular basis, was successful in the end. Once more, it was this leadership in a genuine anti-colonial uprising that enabled the Vietnamese Communists to gain their unique strength. No comparable force exists in any neighbouring country. "Indirect aggression" depends for its success on the political weakness of the attacked régime; it cannot be carried out according to plan in one country after another.

The idea that a Communist success in Viet Nam would automatically start a series of similar take-over bids throughout South-east Asia until "all the dominoes had fallen" ("if we don't fight in Viet Nam we may have to fight in Hawaii") thus must be regarded as an artificial nightmare. Yet it contains one important element of truth: American withdrawal from Viet Nam, in whatever face-saving conditions might be negotiated, would certainly lead some of the Asian members of SEATO to reconsider the usefulness of the American alliance. Pakistan is friendly with Peking even now, and Thailand would probably think a switch to neutrality more useful for her internal stability than American bases might prove to her defence. The U.S. administration is therefore right in believing that a negotiated withdrawal from Viet Nam might be the beginning of the end of the American military presence in continental South-east Asia (though not in Korea, Japan, Formosa, or the Philippines). Two questions then arise: how indispensable is this presence for the containment of Chinese Communist expansion, and how important is that containment for the world role of the United States.

IT IS TRUE that Communist China is a militant revolutionary power, committed to the expansion of its area of domination both by Communist ideology and by nationalist tradition—and where neighbouring countries with American bases are concerned, for obvious strategic reasons as well. It is also true that Peking is steadily probing these latter countries for the chances of "indirect aggression" by revolutionary guerrilla warfare. But observation of Peking's actual strength and behaviour does not suggest that it would attempt, in its present phase of development, to take over neutral neighbouring states by open and direct aggression. Even the 1962 attack on India was a limited operation aimed to intimidate and humiliate the chief rival in the region, not to achieve domination over him. The reason is obvious: in its difficult early stage of industrialisation, Communist China needs international tension, but not major war. Hence if the neighbouring states are free of American bases and do not show a degree of instability that invites a bid for Communist revolution, Peking seems likely to respect their neutrality for the next period. This is not to impute an improbable

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modesty and love of peace to the Chinese Communists—only to suggest that their actions will be based on a more realistic estimate of their strength than their talk.

A neutral South-east Asia, then, would not be a bastion for the military containment of China, but neither would it simply become a Chinese power sphere, provided that Western interest in maintaining the economic and political viability of these countries continued, and that the major non-Communist nations of Asia, India and Japan would be encouraged to play their natural role in assuring the cohesion of the region and balancing Chinese influence. Indeed, a maximum investment in the development and security of neutral India would probably make a far more effective contribution to the containment of Chinese expansion in the present period than any number of American alliances with weak governments whose people hanker for neutrality. As China gets stronger and more threatening, the need for such alliances may one day come to be really felt by these peoples; but for the time being, the encouragement of neutrality and regional cohesion appears as the most effective "strategy of denial" at a limited cost.

Limiting the cost is important, because South-east Asia is, after all, neither an area of vital importance to American security, nor of crucial weight in the world balance of power; and American military strength, however great, is not unlimited and must be allocated between different regions of the world in some proportion to the importance of the objectives at stake. If the U.S. administration insists on maintaining a military presence on the mainland of Asia now, it may succeed only at the price of being drawn into more conflicts of the Vietnamese type. For it is American presence rather than American withdrawal that is likely to expose weak South-east Asian governments to Chinese-stimulated guerrilla uprisings, and to provide Communist propaganda among the suffering peoples of the region with the slogan that peace depends on expelling the Western imperialists. As the United States is drawn deeper into the mire, Communist China will be able to cause a mounting drain on American blood and treasure by a comparatively limited and indirect expenditure of its own strength; and America's freedom of action in other parts of the world will be correspondingly diminished.

THIS BRINGS ME to the wider risks of the present policy. In contrast to many of its American critics, I do not see among these risks the possibility of open Chinese intervention and eventual nuclear escalation. Peking is anxious not to provoke the destruction of its embryonic nuclear establishment by American bombs, and the Soviet Union, while embarrassed ideologically by its inaction in the face of the bombing of a Communist state, is profiting practically from the American involvement in Asia and wisely concentrating on objectives nearer home. Nor do I fear that anything short of a full-scale American attack on China could effectively bring the two main Communist powers together again. The basic fact is that the Sino-Soviet rift has given the West for the first time the chance to choose its priorities in dealing with its two major opponents. The tragedy, from a world-wide point of view, is that instead of a common rational choice reached in consultation among the Western powers, the Americans have drifted into a unilateral choice under the pressure of events in Viet Nam.

For it is impossible that this American commitment on the mainland of Asia could be maintained for any length of time without diminishing the American concern about balancing Soviet strength in Europe. The economic and military resources of the United States may well be sufficient for the dual task; the psychological and mental resources are not. Even now, the American public is beginning to think of Communist China as the one irreconcilable enemy, and of the Soviet Union as a potential ally to be wooed by concessions if necessary; and the administration, while naturally more aware of the unresolved issues in dispute with the Soviets, is driven by its preoccupation with Viet Nam to look on the conflict with China as urgent and immediate, and on that with Russia as dormant and requiring no action at the present moment.

Yet this is a fallacy. For while the Chinese Communists' policy towards the United States is militant and irreconcilable, their power, despite those nuclear explosions, will remain limited so long as they have not solved their problem of industrialisation; and the region immediately threatened by them is also of limited importance in the world balance of power. Conversely, while the Soviet Union is undergoing an evolution that may make possible a genuine solution of her conflicts with the West within a foreseeable time, it is a true world power, facing the United States in the most important single contested region, the power-house called Europe. The undermining of West European confidence in the American alliance could easily lead to a crucial shift in the world balance of power here. If the United States concentrated now on achieving a stable European settlement with Russia instead of the present inherently unstable one, they could face any future Chinese challenge from a position of unassailable strength. If they

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now fritter away their energies on China's periphery, they may suffer an irretrievable loss in Europe without achieving a decision in Asia.

WHEN THE Johnson administration was confronted with its crucial decision, the local situation in Viet Nam was desperate, but the general world situation was extremely favourable to the United States. Since the Cuban missile crisis, its place as the world's greatest military power was uncontested. The Sino-Soviet conflict had destroyed all effective co-ordination of policy between the two principal Communist powers, and the United States was free to choose its priorities in dealing with them. Yet they seem not to have chosen in the light of a careful review of the importance of the issues involved, but to have reacted to the pressure at their point of greatest weakness; and the manner of their choice is proving as harmful as the matter.

They have refused to recognise the fact that even the greatest military power must in certain conditions accept political defeats—a fact recognised by Truman in China, by Eisenhower in Iraq, by Kennedy in Laos—and committed themselves to the attempt to reverse a political defeat by military force. As a result, failure now would be regarded not merely as a political, but as a military defeat of the United States, with correspondingly graver and truly unacceptable consequences. Even if military action succeeds in bringing about a negotiated compromise, that compromise will divide the American people because it cannot truly secure the "independence of South Viet Nam," proclaimed as the purpose of intervention.

They have made a major, long-term commitment on the Asian mainland, which is bound to reduce their concern for Europe and may lead to reduction of their forces there, without consulting their European allies. As a result, they have undermined the confidence of these allies at a critical moment: the number of West Europeans who echo General de Gaulle's doubts about America's reliability has greatly increased. While most of them continue to recognise that they have no alternative to the Atlantic alliance, its bonds have been further weakened —to the common danger of Western Europe and the United States.

They have bombed the territory of a foreign state, not indeed without provocation, but without declaration of war, in defiance of the United Nations Charter, and in open disregard of "world opinion," in a manner comparable to no action by any Western power since the ill-conceived Suez adventure. As a result, they have not only further weakened the United Nations and alienated many neutrals, but have probably undone some of the effect achieved by previous American administrations in seeking to "educate" the Soviets to the observations of certain "ground rules" in the conduct of power conflicts.

Last not least, they have created a crisis of conscience for many loyal American citizens. The people who now oppose the war in Viet Nam are certainly a minority, but they are by no means confined to the usual fringe of pacifists and left-wing extremists; most of them, from university teachers and students to churchmen and other community leaders, are the same kind of democratic idealists who have been the backbone of many liberal causes, from foreign aid to racial integration. The fact that normally they are unable to propose a practicable alternative policy does not diminish the symptomatic importance of their protest, for theirs is primarily a moral reaction to an unaccustomed climate of official cynicism which has to be experienced on the spot to be believed. The airy contempt with which many of the unofficial defenders of official policy nowadays treat such "sentimental" considerations as international law, neutral opinion, or even the wishes of the unfortunate people of Viet Nam, is indeed something new in responsible American circles; to one European who has just spent a year in the United States, it sounded ominously similar to the notorious *"Realpolitik"* of Imperial Germany, while the protesters seemed to embody the American democratic tradition. But it is not possible for a great modern democracy in the long run to call on its young men to fight and die for a cause that bears no intelligible relation to its professed ideals. Any loyal American will defend the security of his country, but a war against "Communism" in far distant lands only makes sense if it is a struggle for the right of peoples to determine their own form of government. It is no trifling matter for the leaders of a free country to undermine the faith of their young generation in the righteousness of its cause.

ASSUMING the U.S. administration came to realise the dangers of the present course—could they still reverse it? Their spokesmen truthfully point out that Peking is obstinately opposed to negotiation on any terms and urges the Vietnamese to fight on until a complete American withdrawal—not, presumably, because the Chinese consider such a military victory likely, but because a protracted war fought by Americans on Asian (but not on Chinese) soil suits their political aims. It is true, too, that under Peking's pressure, the Hanoi government has failed to respond to various indirect overtures for negotiating. Pending such a response, the administration says, holding

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on in Viet Nam is the only alternative to unilateral withdrawal, *i.e.*, to an unacceptable military defeat.

On this last point, they are right. Having involved America's military power and prestige in an ill-chosen issue, the United States cannot simply withdraw and abandon the South Vietnamese leaders and forces allied to them without catastrophic international effect. A political defeat due to the unique history of Viet Nam could be confined to that country—an American military defeat could not. The practical question, therefore, is this: what could the United States still do, beyond the repeated proclamation of its readiness for "unconditional" negotiations, to strengthen the presumptive supporters of such negotiations in Hanoi against their opponents?

It must be recognised that, due largely to the errors committed so far, there is not much scope left for changes between the present policy and an unacceptable capitulation. Yet there are still a very few steps that the United States could, and therefore should, take to facilitate negotiation. While holding on in South Viet Nam, it could stop the bombing of the North, which has clearly reduced the chances of negotiation with Hanoi without achieving much military effect. It could make it clear publicly that it is prepared to accept the Vietcong, or the "National Liberation Front," as a negotiating partner in its own right—not only under some diplomatic disguise —at any peace conference. Above all, it could and should state that it is not committed to maintain the "independence of South Viet Nam" as a state, still less the American military presence there, but only the right of the South Vietnamese to decide their own future in the absence of all foreign troops. In other words, it could even now put itself on the basis of the Geneva agreement of 1954.

If negotiation comes about on such a basis, it should aim at the best possible terms for making a free popular decision possible, and for ensuring the safety of those Vietnamese who have fought the Communists. If it succeeds, the first step will have been taken for extricating the United States from an over-extended military commitment at a bearable price.

If, on the other hand, negotiation continues to be refused by the Vietnamese Communists even after all these steps have been taken, the Americans will have to hold on until their opponents change their mind, and the continued suffering of the Vietnamese people will be the sole responsibility of the Communists. But even in that case, the wider concept of the American role in South-east Asia will have to be revised to prevent an increasing involvement in conflicts on politically unfavourable ground, to allow the neutral Asian powers to play their natural role in balancing Chinese Communist influence, and thus to restore the world-wide freedom of action of the United States.

Haldane

J. B. S. HALDANE was one of the great scientists of our time; but he was also more than that, an all-round human being of a rare sort.

Many of his obituaries have stressed only the experiments he did on himself; but though these were often rather spectacular and sometimes dangerous, they were only a small part of his scientific research. He worked in physiology at Oxford (he was the son of that eminent physiologist, Dr. J. S. Haldane), in biochemistry at Cambridge, on genetics at the John Innes Institution, and later (with his second wife, Helen Spurway) he did some interesting research on the domestication of animals and its results. But his most important work was on the applications of mathematics to genetics, natural selection, and evolutionary theory. Among numerous achievements in this field, he collaborated in the first mapping of a human chromosome, and in the first determination of mutation-rate in a human gene. He formulated what is now called "Haldane's Rule," which states that when (as frequently happens) one sex is abnormal or reduced in numbers in the offspring of a cross between species or subspecies, it is the sex with a single instead of a double dose of sex-chromosome which suffers—the male in mammals and fruit-flies, the female in birds and moths. Indeed it is fair to say that he and another Englishman, R. A. Fisher, together with the American geneticist Sewall Wright, laid the foundations of modern selection theory. His other really valuable achievement lay in linking a number of branches of science together: his book on biochemical genetics opened up a new field of evolutionary science; by pointing out the importance of disease-resistance in evolution, including that of man, he gave a powerful stimulus to modern epidemiology.

In addition, he was an exceptionally gifted populariser of science. The regular articles he wrote for the *Daily Worker* combined brevity, lucidity, and information in a remarkable and indeed unrivalled way. I have been told by his colleagues that he continued to pour out brilliant popular articles when he moved to India.

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HALDANE WAS ALWAYS eccentric, even as the boy of thirteen whom I remember in College at Eton. He was clumsy—the prototype of a character in one of my brother Aldous' later books: the scientist who, as he walked along, seemed to take the room of one-and-a-half ordinary people. As a result, he had a slight inferiority complex, which gave him the chip that was so often on his shoulder. He became very anti-Establishment, and politically very left-wing. For many years he was a member of the Communist Party and on the board of the *Daily Worker*. But his scientific integrity was too much for him when Lysenko with his bogus ideologised genetics was praised and honoured by Stalin and the Party in Russia (and consequently by the Communist Party in Britain): and he resigned from the Party.

His eccentricity often led him to a complete disregard of what people thought about him. When he was an undergraduate at Oxford, there was a strike of the workers on the trams (horse-trams in those days). When the tram company put in blacklegs, Jack walked up and down Cornmarket Street for about an hour, singing—if anything that Jack Haldane did could be called singing, for he had no tone-sense at all—the Athanasian Creed over and over again at the top of his voice. Considering that he was an atheist and also probably the only person in Oxford to know it by heart, it really was funny. He collected such a crowd that the trams were unable to run until the police intervened.

During the War in the Middle East he was wounded and sent to hospital in India. When he was asked to fill out a questionnaire declaring his religion, he wrote "Jew." When asked why, he explained that he didn't want to have visits of consolation from any ministers of religion and knew there were no Rabbis within a thousand miles.

Although he took pride in being a scientific rationalist (and wrote some of his best semi-popular articles for the *Rationalist Annual*), I would say that he was truly humanist. He had an extraordinarily wide interest in and knowledge of poetry, philosophy, and comparative religion. In the remarkable article he published after his cancer operation on what it meant to be "condemned to death," he wrote:

> Epicurus believed in the existence of gods. I believe in them a little less than he did. I believe with the author of the relevant passage in the *Brihhadaranyaka Upanishads* that they are social products, or with Lenin that they are sterile but genuine flowers on the tree of human culture.

Yet in spite of his rejection of all existing religions, he was deeply interested in religious manifestations, and in experiences which somehow transcend the ordinary experiences of everyday life. He took a number of psychodelic drugs—substances which reveal new possibilities of perception—in order to find out how they affected him.

From 1919 to about 1924 he and I were both at Oxford, both of us Fellows of New College; I was married, he was not. He often came round to see us, usually just about tea-time, and would say to my wife, "I don't want anything to eat.... No, no, I don't want anything to eat...."; but he'd always sit next to the tea-table and while talking would devour all the buns and cakes.

He had an astonishing memory and was fond of quoting poetry. Once, after a long visit, he started reciting Shelley and went on and on. I wanted to work: I eventually got him to his feet, shepherded him out of our first-floor drawingroom, down the stairs to the front door, and out on to the doorstep. He was reciting away all the time. Then he forgot one word and made off, saying, "Damn, what a terrible memory I've got!"

At an International Congress in Italy, he had to make an after-dinner speech. During dinner he started scribbling notes on the back of the menu: one was to remind him to quote from memory a long passage from Dante in the original Italian. Later, in India, he would astonish scientific gatherings by quoting extempore from the Hindu epics.

In the early 'twenties, he and I jointly produced a general introductory textbook called *Animal Biology*. He was an admirable collaborator; he was responsible for the physiological part and I for the general biology, but we criticised each other's drafts in a friendly and I think fruitful way. The frontispiece showed two deep-sea angler-fish, one lean and hungry-looking, the other fat and formidable. His mother noticed that these were appropriately opposite the authors' names on the title-page: the lean one opposite me, the fat one opposite Jack.

He certainly had an immense and varied store of knowledge: sometimes, indeed, he seemed to be showing it off. At Oxford in the early days he used to make me feel embarrassed —I was a zoologist, he a physiologist—by asking me if I'd read so-and-so on something-or-other in such-and-such a learned journal, always in my own field. I never had, but I always assumed that he had. But fate caught up with him, in the shape of the Lancelot Hogbens, who were staying with us. Haldane asked me one of those humiliating questions—had I read *X* on something-or-other: but before I could answer, Mrs. Hogben said "Have you?"—and he confessed, "Well, actually I haven't—but I *did* note the title...." However, the range of his mind was

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truly uncanny, and I am sure that by merely reading the title of a paper and glancing at a couple of pages he really could get a good idea of what it was all about.

In his scientific work, he was one of the first to think of evolution as a measurable process. He invented some interesting new terms, *e.g.* the term *"Darwin"* to denote the rate of evolutionary transformation, as mathematically ascertainable from the change in size of measurable characters in a gradually evolving lineage. With these methods he was able to show that the rate of change in natural evolution, *e.g.* in the length of teeth (and other fossil parts) in the horse family, through its nearly sixty million years of evolution, was very slow (about 3½ per cent per million years)—while the rate of change of a character under strong artificial selection (like the butter-content of the milk of the best breeds of milk cattle) was nearly 300,000 times quicker. A *"Morgan,"* on the other hand (after the great American geneticist Thomas Hunt Morgan) denoted the distance between two linked genes on the same chromosome.

He began to feel less and less at home in England, and went off to work in India for the last years of his life. He took Indian citizenship, wore Indian clothes, ate Indian food, and speedily became at home in Indian history, the Hindu classics, and the complexities of Hindu theology. India suited him, though he occasionally got into trouble in one way or another. Certainly in his work there he was very happy. He enjoyed working with Indians, many of whom are mathematically gifted, and was able to put some of his colleagues and research students successfully to work on interesting problems involving no elaborate or expensive apparatus, but only brains and vision. This was good both for biology in general and for Indian science in particular.

I saw him soon after he had had his operation for cancer, a year ago, and he was amazingly brave. It was then that he wrote those incredible verses about his operation and its results, "Cancer's a Funny Thing":

I wish I had the voice of Homer
To sing of rectal carcinoma,
Which kills a lot more chaps, in fact,
Than were bumped off when Troy was sacked....

My final word, before I'm done,
Is "Cancer can be rather fun."
Thanks to the nurses and Nye Bevan
The NHS is quite like heaven
Provided one confronts the tumour
With a sufficient sense of humour.
I know that cancer often kills,
But so do cars and sleeping pills....

Later he went on to write for the 1965 *Rationalist Annual* what can be taken as a last will and testament: an article entitled "On Being Finite," about life and death. In it he wrote:

> I suspect that the notion "I must die" was a very late development. I doubt if it could have arisen without some oral tradition about the past of one's tribe. It must have been a distressing discovery made by many different people, but not a secure part of the human tradition until language had become both fairly precise and fairly abstract. It was extremely difficult to accept, because it is unimaginable. One can imagine oneself playing a golden harp in heaven, in a fire in hell, or reborn as a cockroach, but one cannot imagine nothing. Most humans now believe, and probably most have believed for many thousands of years, in some kind of life after death....
>
> I do not regard the statement that all men desire a longer, or even an eternal, life as an adequate argument. To begin with, it is untrue. The Indian religions are largely concerned with escape from rebirth. Even if it were true of most people, we all of us, at one time or another, desire impossible things in this present life. I have no personal desire to be born again. If I am to be replaced, I would prefer to be replaced by someone without some of my congenital deficiencies, for example tone-deafness....
>
> There is no doubt, however, that in identifying oneself with a great cause one can achieve a partial escape from that aspect of finitude called death. One can do worse than read such a book as Gordon Childe's *What Happened in History* to learn which human achievements have been relatively permanent. The most permanent have, I suppose, been advances in technology [a curious statement from someone who was constantly quoting from the great writers of all periods]. ...I venture to think that some of my scientific discoveries will outlast me, not merely for a human lifetime, but for very much longer.

I am very glad that he realised this, and acknowledged that he had had "a very full experience" of life (including "the embrace of two notoriously beautiful women").

He was a real humanist, in the sense that he believed that every human being had immense potentialities, which, if properly tapped and more fully realised, would give them a richer sense of being, and much greater fulfilment in a more worth-while life.

His death in Orissa at the age of seventy-two marks the passing of a truly distinguished figure. As a scientist he pioneered in the exciting field of mathematical genetics and evolution, and exerted a remarkable cross-fertilising influence in all branches of biology. As a humanist, he demonstrated that it was still possible to be not merely a polymath but an almost universal learner and scholar. As a man, he was extraordinary and unforgettable.

Julian Huxley

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Letter from Paris

The System at the Elysée

THE UNSEEN PRESENCE of the General towers over the rococo interior. Perhaps somewhere in the inner depths a whiff of scent would guide the visitor to the shade of Madame de Pompadour in her boudoir, but the fantasy should be sternly banished. The Fifth Republic is a monarchy, as the *Canard Enchaîné* grasped before most of us, but it has no time for 18th-century frivolities. Beyond the metal gates and the watchful *Gardes Républicains* lies a gravel quadrangle, and beyond that, not the world of Watteau and Fragonard, except for visiting dignitaries, but the austere cerebral world of the technocrats—the *Polytechniciens* and *Normaliens*, the *hauts fonctionnaires* who give Gaullism its underlying structure. Perhaps, after all, the setting is legitimate, for the Elysée has been the home not only of an Emperor, a courtesan, and foreign kings, but of that technocrat of the pre-technocratic age, the financier Beaujon (in 1773).

The magnetism of confidence, and even of illusion—the elevation of the leader's aims and his contempt for contingencies, leaving to the mass the care of details—the isolation of grandeur and renunciation of happiness—these master-ideas of *Le Fil de l'Epée*, first published thirty-three years ago, might well belong to a hypothetical autobiography, written to-day, in 1965. Men of destiny have a habit of doing this, as we know to our cost. (Strange, by the way, that the French language, de Gaulle's vehicle for this richly subtle and allusive study of the qualities of a leader, lacks a word for "leadership.") When Charles de Gaulle was young, his intelligence did not go unnoticed, but his fixed ideas of grandeur were ascribed, perhaps rightly, to an overweening vanity. Undeflected from a chosen course, he carried his ideas with him through two wars, the London period, the Algiers period, the Fighting French triumph, the sudden resignation, the years in the wilderness of Colombey-les-deux-Eglises and the return to power on the back of a higher-ranking general who looked to him to do things he had no intention of doing. Did he also, one wonders, carry with him his devastating notion of the bit-players of the hierarchy, parasites who absorb everything and give nothing in return, safeguarding their careers as civil servants, their promotion as soldiers or their ministers' portfolios? No prestige for such as these, as he noted, but only the deference that comes with custom.

Parasites? Hardly true, thirty-three years later, of the civil servants, though perhaps, the way things are, true in his eyes still of ministers and even soldiers. Certainly he could not do without his higher civil servants, for it is they—the hard-worked men in the shadows—who really govern France from the confines of de Gaulle's Elyseum. "It has been said," one of them told me, "that this constitutes a parallel government. But that's an exaggeration."

I wonder. The essence of the Fifth Republic, tailored to the measurements of an exceptional man, lies in the fact that the Prime Minister, who happens to be M. Pompidou, formerly of Rothschild's, is not the President of the Council of Ministers. The President of de Gaulle's Republic also presides over the Council of Ministers; and that large and unwieldy body is not, in the British sense, a Cabinet. The ministers meet in council, and *en masse*, not at the Hôtel Matignon, where Pompidou works, but at the Elysée, because President de Gaulle is the head of Government as well as Chief of State.

THE AGENDA HAS BEEN decided in advance—by General de Gaulle. The decisions have been taken in advance—by General de Gaulle. And the real purpose of the gathering of the Council is not to thrash out a policy that has already been determined, but to take note of policy decisions, the better to execute them. In effect, the visible government executes the orders of the invisible one.

This is what happens, yet in a sense it *is* an exaggeration to say there is a parallel government. For visible or invisible, the men who help de Gaulle reach decisions or carry out his orders owe their positions entirely to the President of the Fifth Republic. In that sense, all are equal in their inequality, and only one is more equal than the others. In that sense, too, there is only one man in de Gaulle's Government: the presiding President.

DE GAULLE did not of course invent the Elysée system. Some of it he inherited from the long line of underpowered Presidents of the Fourth Republic, notably the departments charged with protocol and other ceremonial matters. But the machinery that had been geared to the needs of ornamental Presidents was inadequate for those of a man who wanted to rule as well as symbolise. The new Elysée has been expanded to meet these wider needs.

As it stands, the Elysée's staff comprises four organs: the *cabinet* (French sense of the term); the secretariat-general; the department for African and Malagasy affairs; and the private general staff.

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They repay closer scrutiny, though not much time need be expended on the *cabinet* or the department for African and Malagasy affairs. The first of these regulates the General's personal life, his appointments, the audiences he grants (to which great importance is attached), receptions, dinners and lunches, and journeys. The second, in effect, maintains the personal and public links between the General and the African empire he has emancipated, now known matter-of-factly as the *ex*-Community. Algerian affairs are handled outside the Elysée by a special office under M. de Broglie (whom, it was said, President Ben Bella telephoned for advice at startlingly frequent intervals).

The real parallel government is the secretariat-general. Its personnel comprises some fifteen high officials, each of whom has charge of one or more departments corresponding to ministries. The most important deal with finance, the interior, foreign affairs, education, scientific research, and information. Extraordinary qualities are required of the scarcely known technocrats who man the secretariat-general. They must be ready to work long hours, to produce, in written form, with unerring accuracy and sometimes sooner than seems possible, the facts, figures, and arguments with which General de Gaulle will confront the responsible minister when the time comes; and of course to bear the brunt of ministerial ire or envy when criticism or suggestions are resented. In short, an electronic brain encased in the hide of a rhinoceros.

Though de Gaulle values the *tête-à-tête* over lunch or dinner (a rarely accorded honour) and the small, informal discussion, he wants everything of importance in writing. To be a Gaullist functionary is thus an exacting occupation for which only a physically-fit intellectual élite need apply. The ones I met were lean, hard, natty, civilised, and far from given to day-dreaming.

IN CHARGE OF THIS impressive contingent is an outsize personality, the secretary-general, Etienne Burin des Roziers, who, in his early fifties, is the third personage of this republican kingdom, after the President himself and his Prime Minister. This Oxonian ex-ambassador has belonged to de Gaulle's innermost circle since 1945. His daily dosage of reading is awe-inspiring: all the diplomatic telegrams, all draft laws; all the notes, reports, and dossiers prepared by the high officials pass through his hands. At the Elysée, under the shadow of the Presidents, he is the biggest of the "big four"—the others being Georges Galichon, head of the *cabinet*, who, besides arranging the General's appointments, has his remaining time full listening to those whom the General declines to receive; Jacques Foccart, a much parachuted ex-Resistance man, who is in charge of African and Malagasy affairs and also looks after tenebrous matters of intelligence and security; and Admiral Philippon, about whose name hangs an aura of war-time heroism connected with Brest and the *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau*. Now Philippon runs the fourth of the organs of the Elysée, once known as the *Maison Militaire*, and now called the private general staff (*Etat-Major Particulier*). Everything military, including NATO relations, the *force de frappe* and nuclear research for military ends, comes under Philippon, who is also, for good measure, in command of the General's aides-de-camp.

These are the organs, but how do they pulsate, gestate, digest, or otherwise function? The secret is known, but shrouded in mystery. It consists of a procedure evolved for de Gaulle's purposes and known as "restricted councils." Nobody but the participants knows what goes on at these meetings which, by definition, are small. The written word, essential to de Gaulle in other respects, is out of its element here: there is no agenda for the restricted councils, and no record is kept either of the proceedings or of the identities of participants (though there is nothing, I suppose, to stop the latter from confiding in their diaries). The high officials and their departmental chiefs are constantly producing memoranda for de Gaulle. When the General feels a question has ripened sufficiently, he calls a restricted council.

STRICTLY, THE SYSTEM did exist before de Gaulle, but the only restricted council that could be called by his predecessors was the *Conseil Général de la Magistrature*, which deals with civil and judiciary appointments and survives under the Fifth Republic. The originality of the system as it now stands lies in its expansion to duplicate and anticipate the work of the ministries. Regular restricted councils are now held on military, African and Malagasy, and Algerian affairs (de Broglie coming to the Elysée for the latter); and less regular ones on economic and financial affairs, education, scientific research, public works, radio and television, agriculture, and foreign policy.

All the high officials who head departments are of high calibre, but those most in demand in restricted councils are: Jacques Boitreaud, in his early forties, who deals with the Council of State and keeps in touch with the Prime Minister and the ministers of justice and the interior; Jean Dromer, still in his thirties, an Inspecteur des Finances who, appropriately, looks after economic and financial affairs; René de St. Légier de la Sausaye, on loan from the Quai d'Orsay, who is available should de Gaulle ever want advice, or more likely, documentation on

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diplomacy and international affairs; and Jacques Narbonne, an ex-teacher (like Pompidou), who now deals with public health, education, and scientific research, in which capacity he is "in" on defence matters, together with Admiral Philippon.

HASTY CONCLUSIONS should be avoided. As I have described it, the system sounds a perfect recipe for secret and absolute rule[1] and the high officials sound like overworked men at the beck and call of a tyrant. But de Gaulle is *sui generis* and makes short shrift of preconceived notions. Though an exacting taskmaster who makes a fetish of punctuality, he doesn't expect his advisers to be yes-men. By definition, indeed, they are not: he has hand-picked the best administrative brains and they argue with him if need be, knowing always that in the end he will make his decisions alone and stand by them.

Too often, however, he merely reads a report, endorses it "seen" and takes no action; just as often, a decision is taken, but somewhere between the thrusting high official and a more devious minister, the decision trickles out into a dry creek of immobility. "It is as though," a prominent Gaullist told me, "you were on a ship sailing for the North Pole and an officer put a piece of paper before the captain, proposing a change of direction to the South Pole. The captain reads it, marks it 'seen,' and the ships sails on heading north."

PERHAPS all this means is that General de Gaulle, whose enduring meditations on the State and the meaning of power were made decades ago, came to his present high office too late in life. It is refreshing, anyway, to be told, as I was, that the Elysée system was evolved "pragmatically," the way the British do things, and that it is still evolving. This may account for the faint and un-French suggestion of muddling through which I sensed beyond the gravel quadrangle. In time, if de Gaulle lives on, the system may reach at least a theoretical perfection. Then, no doubt, it will be time to scrap it, for the next President, whoever he is, is no more likely to find himself suited by the General's administration than by his outsize uniform.

Brian Crozier

[1] It reminded me forcefully of the parallel government, run from the French commissioner-general's office, when Viet Nam was supposed to be under Bao Dai.

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An Appeaser and his Reputation

By Christopher Sykes

INSCRUTABLE MEN of action are half the fascination of history, the sphinx-characters such as Talleyrand or Fouché about whom even the closest student cannot quite make up his mind. The late Lord Halifax, whose life is presented in a detailed and fearlessly honest biography[1] by Lord Birkenhead, does not at first sight fit into this company. He was open, extrovert, candid in his beliefs and preferences, and yet, although with all this he lived in the glare of public life, he leaves a question mark.

He was made up of contradictions: he had a baffling way of not running true to form when most expected to. He earned high academic distinction, but as Minister of Education, both in 1922 and 1932, he filled the post with exceptional lack of drive, imagination, or even interest. He was an aristocratic Tory who had little quarrel with the extremest anachronisms of his type, but in his first major appointment his progressive policy drove Tories mad. He was probably the greatest Viceroy of India to appear in the last fifty years of Imperial rule. He was a deplorable Foreign Secretary under Neville Chamberlain, the worst of whose policy he supported without reserve. Yet it is probably true to say that, as Ambassador to Washington, no man did more to undo the damage which Chamberlainite policy had inflicted on our reputation in America. Chamberlain is blamed for all that went wrong in our wretched years before the war, but few people blame Halifax who was as fatally active in the appeasement policy. As Lord Birkenhead makes clear, this is as true of the informed political world as of public opinion. He is not a simple subject though the impression he made was of simplicity.

What sort of man was he really? Lord Birkenhead does not answer the question categorically, or rather he does not force his conclusion on his readers, but, like the good biographer he is, he suggests what this conclusion might be.

There is a first thing to remember about Halifax. He was not incapable of ambition but it was never his ruling passion. He always took office reluctantly. This was not due to weakness or insincerity or excessive modesty, but came from humility of soul. One of the finest things in his life was his long service as a combatant officer in the First World War, although, as a promising young member of Parliament, he was the continual recipient of invitations to undertake interesting, valuable, and safe work at home. In addition to these temptations, a deformity of the hand gave him every honourable excuse to avoid active service. But he believed that for these interesting tasks there were plenty of other men as capable, and he hated not to share war-misery with less privileged men.

In later years his reluctance, though always influenced by humility, was also due to his delight in his private life, his family circle, his Yorkshire estates, his enjoyment of country sport and especially fox-hunting, for which he had a passion. A contradiction appears again here. When we find a man torn between private life and a great career, we expect the private life to be of unusual richness, as in the case of Balfour or Rosebery. With his well-trained mind Halifax developed formidable administrative ability, but he had no taste for strong mental recreation. He had the appearance of a great intellectual, but he was of philistine disposition. Philosophy, literature, and the arts meant nothing to him. His private life could never have given him the abundant mental stimulus which he must have needed and which office gave him. It may be that he was less reluctant than he knew.

Nevertheless the division of impulse was there all the time, and it does not seem extravagant to suppose that when office divorced him from private life he could not give all of himself to the office. It is to be noted that in his most distinguished political achievements, in India and the United States, he could not only take his private life with him, but it was in a sense

[1] *Halifax*. By THE EARL OF BIRKENHEAD. Hamish Hamilton, 63s.

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part of the office. Lady Halifax was an admirable Vicereine and ambassadress.

His background explains a certain amount. He came of an old landed family of Yorkshire who in his grandfather's time came to political prominence and "married well." His kind of family is not considered aristocratic on the continent, but in more practical England it is. We value "ancient riches" (and modern) and political distinction more than quarterings. Since the first Tudors, Halifax's kind of family has shown remarkable skill in political manoeuvre, and they gave England its oligarchical character. His father was not a politician but he and his relations had the instincts of their kind. Under their influence, as a young man, Halifax entered parliament merely (so far as appears) because it was expected of him. Early he showed some independence of political thought, but, until he went to India, he conformed easily enough with the traditions and beliefs of his class.

HE HAD STRONG REASON to do so. Early in life he had become the sole heir, through the death of his three elder brothers, to a prodigious inheritance. He took on its responsibilities with eager conviction. He saw the duty of the gentry as that of political leadership combined with earnest, if at times severe, tutelage of those in their care. People sometimes thought of him as class-conscious. This was mistaken. He was not introspective enough to be that; on the contrary he gave the matter so little thought that he was not easily aware that his position was the subject of strenuous challenge. He knew this in theory but not through his Yorkshire experience. Elsewhere in England he might have become acutely conscious of an opposition. He was more often than not a poor judge of individual character (a point Lord Birkenhead emphasises) but, though sometimes a slow starter, he was sensitive to movements of opinion. His career in India shows this.

Halifax's inborn aristocratic attitude to life did not mean that the humility was anything short of authentic, and this fine quality was at the root of his Indian achievement. The stories of Halifax relying on prayer alone, sometimes with Gandhi, are absurd legends, but the legends indicate the fact. From his father he had inherited an ardent religious faith which he maintained undaunted by the stress of experience or any crisis of doubt. As few could, he recognised that within Gandhi's nationalist agitation, there existed the faith that can move mountains, and which cannot be combated by force, or, in the last analysis, combated at all. So, acting in a spirit of religious resignation (using the term in its strictest sense), and against a natural disposition to maintain Imperial rule, Halifax took a fateful step to early Indian independence. It is clear from Lord Birkenhead's book that the main initiative was with the Viceroy throughout.

The Indian chapters form a highlight of this biography. Lord Birkenhead's picture of Gandhi is particularly good. The great Indian leader was not the peerless and guileless saint that his Indian and Western admirers have made out. He was a sly, ruthless, tortuous master of intrigue, not above trying to confuse negotiation to his advantage by mixing practical discussion with religious vapouring. The Viceroy was often bewildered by him but never taken in. His Tory critics regarded his whole performance as a monstrous essay in weakness, but nothing could have been farther from the truth. In him Gandhi found his most formidable opponent, not least because Halifax never lost sight of the genuine greatness in the other.

Charm is sometimes associated with feebleness, but Halifax's immense charm, which he sometimes exerted to excess, never indicated a strain of softness, and Lord Birkenhead relates one curious incident of his Indian administration which suggests an unpleasant degree of hardness under the suavity and kindly manner. We are told that on a visit to the North West Frontier he expressed jocose approval of a plan to provoke two factions of a tribe to fight each other. The reader may, however, be misled. It is not quite clear how seriously Lord Birkenhead is writing at this moment and whether the hostilities really took place. It should be stressed that even if the story is to be taken literally the blot cannot take away seriously from an achievement which probably saved us a devastating Anglo-Indian war.

The great Indian period of Halifax's life was followed by one of minor interest. It was not an unrewarding one for him, however, thanks chiefly to the local hunt of which he was now master. He returned to politics in 1932 when (repeating his earlier failure) he again became President of the Board of Education. For a few months in 1935 he was Secretary of State for War. In this post (he later recorded) he was horrified by the state of the defences, and the knowledge influenced subsequent actions. Another major period of his life began at the end of 1935 when as Lord Privy Seal and then Lord President of the Council he became a factor in foreign policy. In February 1938 he succeeded Anthony Eden at the Foreign Office, and remained there till January 1941.

This last is the worst and saddest chapter, and he must be accounted among our culpably unsuccessful Foreign Secretaries. He was an odd choice for the post since, like some of his pre-

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decessors, he had the British defect of being incurious about the continent. (In the same way cooks in British hotels are sometimes chosen in spite of their fatal incuriosity about the art of cooking.) Halifax was lost in the European scene. When he met Hitler in 1937 he did not grasp what was happening. "He struck me as very sincere" he reported after this only meeting with the hideous spell-binder of Berchtesgaden.

A contradiction again leaps up here. Halifax was not merely deceived. He had a sharp mind and he showed some real insight into Hitler. In his report he also wrote this: "An explorer who has overcome countless perils in a savage land returns home to find his family unaware of his achievements and immersed in local politics and problems. Their meeting is friendly, but he feels they are living in a different world and do not speak the same language. The analogy is not perfect, but it illustrates Hitler's attitude towards meeting a representative of the British Government." The remark is both perspicacious and imaginative, but at the same time, in the conception of Hitler as a loyal member of a family circle, seeking some family reunion, it shows Halifax's remoteness from and utter inability to recognise the depths of evil in Nazism and its leaders.

As Eden's successor, the conjunction of his occasional perspicacity, charm, and utterly misguided wish to believe well of the worst, made him a fatally potent instrument of Neville Chamberlain's policy. He did what he could to weaken declining French resolve and to dissuade the Czechs from resistance to Nazi chicanery and brutality. For long he clung to the conviction that Hitler would grow tame under the treatment. When he had to deal with the devil in person he seems to have forgotten the doctrine of original sin.

His biographer is unable to soften this ghastly story, but he gives the defence with detail and clarity. The defence is familiar and strong, and in outline is as follows. Since 1919 Great Britain as a whole, and encouraged by all parties, had entered a period of decadent escapism in which our defences were neglected in compliance with a morbid spirit of thoughtless pacifism. If in 1938, not yet at the end of that period, we had gone to war we might easily have lost it. Our best hope from armed intervention was probably a stalemate fiasco, which might easily have been to Hitler's advantage. Munich, therefore, with all its abominations, was inevitable. Halifax helped to drive it through for that reason.

Guilt is a question of dates, said Talleyrand on a historic occasion. Munich was a very different occasion, but the saying applies. If, after India, Halifax had remained in a private station till 1939, then the defence would be unanswerable. But it was otherwise. He had been a minister since 1932, had seen the terrifying state of defence from inside in 1935, four years, ample time for reparation, before Munich; and he had been Foreign Secretary since the beginning of 1938. Since 1933 he had not given encouragement to those few, notably Winston Churchill, who clamoured for effective, if need be conscriptural rearmament, while there was still time. On Talleyrand's date-theory he was guiltier than his chief.

In a way his temperament forced him into his role and his guilt. He was not a blind Municheer: he saw the extent of the disaster before Chamberlain and reacted against it. But the man who had negotiated with Gandhi remained so much an appeaser at heart that he could never easily see the difference between pacific approaches to the appeasable and to the implacable, and after Hitler's fall, in a time of similar perils, he not only disapproved of Churchill's Fulton speech but urged him to soften its effect by making appeasement gestures to Stalin. He personified appeasement, but few people have the right to lay blame on him for that. If all men were honest the blame would be shared, and confessed in dust and ashes, by thousands and indeed millions of our countrymen.

Like his namesake, Halifax was a trimmer if ever there was one. This need not be said in disparagement. In him it was sometimes a valuable and even virtuous talent. He did not trim for the sake of prestige or power, but often enough because he could remain open to good advice, as when he transformed himself from an ill-suited Foreign Secretary into a great ambassador. He was helped in Washington by an unconventional councillor, his cousin, Angus McDonnell. When he once remarked that the Americans were "odd people," McDonnell swiftly put him to rights. "On the contrary," he said, "it is *you* who are odd. You have led a very sheltered life." If only he had had more Angus McDonnells to unshelter his life!

He died in 1959, full of honours and sincerely admired by his fellow countrymen. It would be wrong to say that he was forgiven, because his mistakes and aberrations had never made the deep and bitter impression that Chamberlain's similar failings had made on public opinion. In part this was a triumph over destiny of his impressive personality, but there was more to it than that. On balance, the tribute was deserved. His good deeds far outshone the bad, and people followed a right instinct when they saw his honourable private character as the key to the whole. Munich belongs to a dark phase of British decadence which one hopes (even if not always too confidently) will never recur.

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What Halifax did for the British name in India still endures.

Lord Birkenhead's book is a fine sustained achievement, though it is not free from weaknesses of presentation. The evocations of Yorkshire country life sometimes err on the side of sentimentality, and a more serious fault appears in a recurrent lack of flow in the narrative line. Points are anticipated and thus lose dramatic impact, and established points are sometimes needlessly repeated.

It is a far-ranging book and final judgment must rest on the general impression. This is entirely successful and one who for many years knew Lord Halifax, albeit at large removes of age and position, finds him here as a living presence. A reader who never saw or met him is sure of the same experience. He was an elusive man not to be caught and defined. Lord Birkenhead has not attempted this, but something better. He has amassed the evidence from many quarters and delineated the question mark with a sure hand. The answer is firmly implied.

Cultivated Innocence

The Reign of Wonder: Naïvety and Reality in American Literature. By TONY TANNER. *Cambridge University Press*, 47s. 6d.

NEARLY TWENTY YEARS ago I visited a Teachers' College in Kansas and was given some of the students' essays to read. I cannot remember now exactly what the subject of the essays was, but it involved some discussion of the value of the study of history. I was much struck by one essay which opened with the flat statement that Americans were not interested in history since, unlike the old countries of Europe, they looked to the present and the future rather than to the past. History, in fact, was un-American.

Now in a sense this is of course a very naïve and indeed a preposterous attitude; nevertheless, it represents something very real and very deep in the American consciousness. *Homo Americanus* is, and ought to be, man without history, man responding to his immediate environment in innocence and wonder with the uncorrupted vision of a child, a primitive, a backwoodsman: this view runs with surprising continuity through American literature from Emerson (to go no further back) to J. D. Salinger. Emerson not only exclaimed, "We have listened too long to the courtly muses of Europe"; he also held up as the ideal observer "the child with his sweet pranks, the fool of his senses, commanded by every sight and sound, without any power to compare and rank his sensations, abandoned to a whistle or a painted chip, to a lead dragoon or a ginger-bread dog, individualising everything, generalising nothing." Thoreau not only exclaimed, "How much virtue there is in simply seeing!" He also noted in his journal his belief "that we should treat our minds as innocent and ingenuous children whose guardians we are.... Routine, conventionality, manners, etc., etc.—how insensibly an undue attention to these matters dissipates and impoverishes the mind, robs it of its simplicity and strength, emasculates it!" Whitman not only called on his Muse to "migrate from Greece and Ionia" to take up her habitation in the "better, fresher, busier sphere," the "wide, untried domain" that awaited her; he also wrote, *"I loafe and invite my soul,/I lean and loafe at my ease observing a spear of summer grass."* Whitman's loafing reminds us of Thoreau's advocacy of "a true sauntering of the eye," of Huckleberry Finn's "lazying" while employing the naïve vision of the child and the outcast, of Gertrude Stein's protest against "letting remembering mix itself with looking" and her endeavour to redeem words from history and continuity in favour of "moment to moment emphasising." We may be reminded, too, of Sherwood Anderson's deep urge to record the "odd little things" that make up experience directly and naïvely without the patterning and interpretation of the interfering mind. And we may recall the famous passage from Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms* which concludes, "Abstract words such as glory, honour, courage or hallow were obscene beside the concrete names of villages, the numbers of roads, the names of rivers, the numbers of regiments and the dates."

There is something refreshing, and there is also something dangerous, in this American tradition. At its best it can, in Tony Tanner's words, "refresh and revivify our vision of the world." To treat even the familiar as an object of wonder, to confront the external world afresh, redeemed from all the accretions of prejudice, presupposition and tradition, can result in a genuine new vision. It can also, if set beside more conventional ways of seeing and responding, cast a dark ironic shadow on convention itself and on the whole world of gentility and indeed of organised society. (Huckleberry Finn does this in one way; the heroine of *What Maisie Knew* does it in another.) Innocence can show up civilisation as corrupt. But it can also produce facility, sentimentality, even fatuity. If

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every observer is to start afresh, with no help from the past experience of the race, civilisation of any kind will eventually become impossible since cumulative knowledge, on which civilisation is based, will not be allowed to develop. This is a heavy price to pay for freedom from corrupting conventions and distorting preconceptions. The price will include the loss of art, for art cannot exist long as a series of unrelated primitive productions. Gertrude Stein, for all her brilliance, and for all her influence on Sherwood Anderson and Ernest Hemingway, preached the death of language as an art medium when she urged that words should be cut off from their history.

> A word can always express more than it means; it has a history. I do not mean simply an etymology: it has a past; it has lived in different works and undergone the influence of its environment; it has had adventures; it has had encounters; it has been helped, supported by other words, or else it has come to their aid, has sustained them; and it retains hazy recollections of all its former companions, like a halo around itself.

These words of Jacques Rivière, quoted by Dr. Tanner in his chapter on Gertrude Stein, sum up this aspect of the problem very well.

There is also the charge that can be made against Emerson and others of the American Transcendentalists that they sought an "unearned" vision; they imagined that they could move from naïve wonder in regarding particulars to a mystic view of the divine unity underlying everything simply by sliding from one to the other. Even Thoreau, who had a grainier sense of the stubborn reality of individual facts than Emerson, can move from "closeness to the physical fact" to a view of the language that records those facts as "the symbol of the spiritual" in a single sentence. Nevertheless, the realisation "that the writer need not surround native local facts with established 'poetry' but can entice fresh and relevant poetry from the facts themselves, *simply by stating those facts*, has had a profound influence on American writing." This is largely the theme of Dr. Tanner's book, which moves from the Transcendentalists to Walker Percy's novel *The Moviegoer* in tracing this tradition in American literature.

THE THESIS IS NOT, of course, new, but the intelligence and perceptiveness with which Dr. Tanner has developed and illustrated it help to make his book a stimulating invitation to reconsider this aspect of American literature. Who would have thought to see Henry James in this company of strategic innocents? But it is possible to look carefully at *What Maisie Knew*,

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The Awkward Age, and *The Sacred Fount* and see in all three James' deliberate placing of the innocent observer of a corrupt or at least a complex society—not so as to indict society or glorify simplicity but rather so as to shadow forth, in all kinds of subtle ways, the relation of the artist (who is always to some extent an observer and an outsider) to the material in real life out of which he shapes his art. The artist is a special kind of innocent. This is an intriguing point, and persuasively argued; Dr. Tanner's accounts of these three works of James are among the best I have read, and I have found them genuinely helpful. But is this equation, or partial equation, of innocent and artist really in the great American tradition of naïvety and wonder? If this is so, then the argument would apply to many more than James. The "alienated artist" (and, so far as society is concerned, the innocent is the alienated) is one of the commonest themes in modern literature both European and American —indeed, more often European than American. An American scholar has recently published a study of the artist as hero in European and American fiction in the late 19th and 20th centuries: there are thousands of them.

James, says Dr. Tanner,

> took the untutored eye—so revered by the Transcendentalists—and subjected it to a dynamic, unprogrammed education. And watching the naïve person assimilating, misconstruing, digesting, regurgitating, concentrating, omitting, as he or she was faced with the task of visually appropriating the world, James learnt something profound about the whole question of veridical knowledge, about the whole problem of verifying impressions.

He concludes that in James' stories and novels we see that

> for the truly naïve eye, the habit of wonder, there is no place in the social centre of the world: it must either give way to some more worldly perspective in the world, or flee, or die. And yet —and this links James with Emerson and Thoreau —it is the naïve wondering eye which most generously celebrates and responds to the full range of experience.

This is true of Maisie and Nanda, and it is illuminating to have it put this way; but it is only part of the truth. Further, to argue, as Dr. Tanner does, that "Henry James was the first . . . writer to inquire into the fate of wonder when it is introduced into the clotted complexities of society and the turbulence of time" is to forget (or to be ignorant of) those numerous early American novels which show the innocent countryman confronting the complications of an urban society. "For early 19th-century America," observed Daniel Hoffman in his seminal book, *Form and Fable in American Fiction*, "the Yankee villager is one expression of the myth of innocence, the Yankee peddler of the myth of competence." These two confronted each other in American fiction before James was born, and even if the confrontation represented a much cruder version of the innocent-observer-in-society theme than we find in James, the authentic theme is certainly there. "The usual pattern of one numerous *genre* of the American novel," wrote Hoffman, "is to move an innocent character from his country home into the temptations and evils of city life. This pattern conforms not only to that found in the 'young man from the provinces' class of novels, but also to the movement of populations in the American 19th and 20th centuries." It might be at least as interesting to set James in *this* tradition as to set him beside Emerson and Thoreau.

Just as it can be argued that this aspect of James can be related to other American traditions than that traced by Dr. Tanner, so it could on the other side be argued that some at least of the phenomena that Dr. Tanner sees as bound up with the American tradition of the innocent eye can be seen as having an affinity with an important European movement. The imagination's kindling at objects, an almost mystic sense of reality deriving from intense perception of things which on any traditional standard can only be considered trivial (and we find this in Thoreau, Whitman, Sherwood Anderson, Hemingway, among others), reminds us irresistibly of Joyce's "epiphany." Dr. Tanner does indeed suggest that Sherwood Anderson "at his best does sometimes achieve that which Joyce said short stories should aim at—an epiphany," though he denies that Hemingway's moments of clarity and meaning are epiphanies in Joyce's sense.

But isn't there more to it than this? The sense of reality as a private revelation coming to one unexpectedly as a result of chance confrontation of an object or objects which at any other time would have no special meaning and even now have no special meaning to anybody else—such a sense we find developing among European novelists (including British) in response to that breakdown in the public sense of what is significant in experience out of which one might almost say the modern novel was born. The feeling of living in a private world in which one finds meaning only through the personal epiphany is common enough in the novel of the 1920s and 1930s. When novelists find tradition untenable, find that their roots do not nourish and the patterns of significance to which society pays lip service have no meaning for them, they have travelled, as it were, to an America of the mind and sensibilities. They are like those ideal pristine Americans who pitted their virgin sen-

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sations against a virgin country. "What is meant by reality?" asked Virginia Woolf in 1928. And she answered: "It would seem to be something very erratic, very undependable—now to be found in a dusty road, now in a scrap of newspaper in the street, now in a daffodil in the sun." Doesn't this remind us of Sherwood Anderson's "little things," of William Carlos Williams' poem "The Red Wheelbarrow" (*"so much depends/upon/a red wheel/barrow/glazed with rain/water/beside the white/chickens"*), of Thoreau's feeling that nature "must steal on us when we expect it not," of Emerson's "power to fix the momentary eminency of an object"? When traditions fail, European novelists cultivate the innocent eye: to that extent, perhaps Dr. Tanner would say, they make themselves American.

But it was less the failure of tradition than the renunciation of tradition that motivated the first American proponents of wonder. Language must be geared to what is actually seen (it is remarkable how *sight* is the one sense that matters to all these writers) uncorrupted by prior formulations, and to this end "children and savages" (Emerson's phrase) are the models, and a vernacular speech more effective than worn out literary modes. The search for a workable vernacular is one of the great themes in American literature, and the central achievement here is, of course, Mark Twain's *Huckleberry Finn*. Dr. Tanner's splendid chapters on this great novel are really the core of his book and constitute one of the most illuminating studies of Mark Twain I know.

> It was Clemens who finally and completely inverted the pastoral situation and perfected the vernacular-child-narrator with a fruitfully naïve perspective on life and a manner of speaking which was an adequate vehicle for the new point of view.

In doing this he was led into a deeper attack on the conventions of society than he must have been aware of. The final realisation that modern life has no place for innocence, that the American Eden which had once provoked the authentic response of wonder no longer exists and that this response is now available only to the outcast, darkened the latter part of Mark Twain's life and is surely responsible for the puzzling final section of *Huckleberry Finn*. Dr. Tanner charts this movement in Twain's imagination with sensitive particularisation.

This is one of the great crises of American experience, and if we understand it, it seems to me, we understand that fluctuation between

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Dream and Nightmare that is so marked in American literature in the last hundred years and more. The paradox of the co-existence of the Great Society and the H-bomb is not new.

David Daiches

Painter's Proust

Marcel Proust. Volume II. By GEORGE PAINTER. *Chatto & Windus*, 40s.

IT HAS TAKEN George Painter six years to bring out the second half of his biography of Proust, instead of two as originally announced. Evidently he underestimated the length and scope of his labours—a habit which he may well have caught from his master. For it was only while actually writing *A la Recherche* that Proust came to discern its true proportions, and despite his initial chagrin the long delay in publishing *A l'Ombre des Jeunes Filles en Fleurs* turned out to be a blessing in disguise. The postponement (from 1913 to 1919) enabled him to round off the pattern of his experience, pursuing the possibilities of his nature further than he would have dared before, and also gave him a chance to expand and refine his masterpiece until it tallied with his inner vision. The material which he added during these years was bone and muscle rather than fat, not self-indulgent but essential to his artistic purpose.

The inception and growth of *A la Recherche* naturally overshadow everything else in Mr. Painter's new volume. Where previously a touch of the gossip-columnist was called for, he now needs to be far more the patient editorial excavator. This is a role in which he shines, as anyone who recalls his masterly handling of Proust's submission to Ruskin in the first volume will know. In the present volume he begins by showing how Ruskin's influence waned, a process as fitful and long-drawn-out as the *oubli* which eventually dissolves a Proustian love-affair. The introductory essay to Proust's translation of *Sesame and the Lilies* marks a crucial break, all but standing Ruskin on his head in its denial of the direct moral benefits of literature. It must be taken in context, however, as a declaration of independence, the expression not of a settled Proustian attitude (which if only in view of his powers as a critic would be absurd), but of his mood in 1905. A further stage in his struggle to emancipate himself from his literary forbears came three years later with the series of brilliant parodies prompted by the Arsène Lupinesque affair of Sir Julius Wernher and the Lemoine Diamonds. These in turn pointed forward to *Contre Sainte-Beuve*, which Mr. Painter analyses step by step, emphasising that passages which were once taken as intimations of the masterpiece to come are in fact more likely to be reworkings of earlier drafts. The moment of transfiguration was close at hand, however. In a sense it had already come: the episode of the *madeleine* (in reality, a rusk) took place just as Proust was embarking on the second version of *Contre Sainte-Beuve*, at the beginning of 1909, but at first he failed to appreciate its significance for him. Continuing to revise the essay, he juxtaposed two novels in the section on Balzac—*La Recherche de l'Absolu* and *Les Illusions Perdues*—and stumbled towards his title. Finally, a month or two later, the revelation of the *madeleine* came home to him. By July 1909 he was hard at work on *Swann*.

Mr. Painter's treatment of *A la Recherche* is as admirably methodical as one would expect. He unscrambles the chronology and separates layer after layer, revealing a Proust who was ready to feed his immediate experiences of wartime Paris into the stream of recollection, and even to go out in deliberate search of material. (He hired musicians in order to help him distil the Vinteuil Septet.) Some persistent fallacies about the history of Proust's reputation are cleared up—*Swann* was by no means a complete flop, nor was *A l'Ombre* an instant success; and there is a blow-by-blow account of his dealings with publishers, notably his efforts to extricate himself from Grasset once he had overcome the suspicions of André Gide and the *NRF* group. Judged by ordinary business standards Proust doesn't come particularly well out of this episode, but where the future of his novel was at stake he could be like a tigress defending her young, and he knew the value of the *NRF* imprint. (He could also be decidedly unsentimental in money matters: when he left the Boulevard Haussmann he arranged for the famous cork walls to be sold to a bottle-manufacturer). In the end his manoeuvres helped him to taste the glory which he was quite frank about wanting to enjoy before he died, although he owed even more to the exertions of his friends—notably Léon Daudet, who led the backstairs campaign which secured him the Prix Goncourt.

Despite the incidental excitements of literary politics, the ructions and intrigues, it is inevitable that the life of a middle-aged novelist should make drier reading than that of a young social climber. Few periods in a writer's career are as humdrum as the ones when he is actually engaged in writing, and Mr. Painter is hardly to be blamed if much of his material is less immediately colourful than it was in his first volume. But he also has murkier or more

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sensational regions to traverse than those of authorship. In the years when Proust was working out his artistic salvation he was also giving the rein to tendencies which he had largely kept under control during his mother's lifetime. It was as though he were simultaneously trying to transform himself into both Charlus and Bergotte. His affections fastened, gradually but tenaciously, on Alfred Agostinelli, who emerges from these pages as a likeable and rather pathetic figure: one of the most touching passages in the book is the account of the plane-crash in which he was killed at the age of twenty-six. (He had run away from the Boulevard Haussmann and enrolled in a flying-school near Antibes under the pseudonym of "Marcel Swann.") Oddly enough, Proust had already sketched out the captivity, flight and accidental death of Albertine six months before Agostinelli first became his "prisoner"—a doleful instance of nature catching up with art. Not that Mr. Painter accepts the total identification of Albertine with Agostinelli, except in the final phase. He argues that she was as much of a composite as the other major characters, with elements in her of several of the girls to whom Proust was attracted in youth, and even more of the ones who visited him, with his mother's tacit encouragement, in the relaxed period following his father's death.

Mr. Painter has been criticised in some quarters for endowing Proust with stronger heterosexual feelings than he could have had in reality. At times he does admittedly push rather hard in this direction: one isn't entirely convinced by references to Proust's "silent immobile love-making" with Louisa de Mornand. But personally I can't bring myself to object very strenuously on this particular score. After all, Proust must certainly have been susceptible to women—he could hardly have created Odette or Gilberte or Rachel-when-from-the-Lord otherwise. (Even Albertine, though abstract and shadowy in comparison with Proust's other women, is plausibly feminine, not in the least a man in skirts.) Mr. Painter's treatment of Proust's openly sadistic phase, on the other hand, leaves me somewhat uneasy. There is too much tut-tutting, and at the same time too much reliance on the hearsay evidence of Maurice Sachs, who commands about as much confidence in the witness-box as Baron Münchausen would. No doubt Proust was capable of tormenting rats for his pleasure, or furnishing a brothel with his dead parents' chairs and sofas; but as presented here, the picture seems unduly melodramatic.

The case of Maurice Sachs may well be exceptional. Whether Mr. Painter is generally

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inclined to be uncritical of his sources, to treat them as all of equal value, only another Proustian scholar could say for sure, but as far as a layman can judge his standards are high. He has sifted the evidence scrupulously, and rearranged an unwieldy mass of materials with admirable clarity, so that for ordinary readers, in England at least, his book now subsumes most of the previous biographical literature on Proust. In a word, he is indispensable, and we must signal our gratitude. Yet one reader at least must also admit to a certain lowering of the spirit. Mr. Painter sometimes succeeds in doing what Proust himself even at his least engaging never does, making one ask whether it is really worth all the effort. Needless to say one feels far better-informed after reading him, but I don't know if one is that much the wiser. Ultimately there is something about Proust's greatness which eludes him.

Part of the trouble comes from his decision to adhere so faithfully to the published sources, which inevitably means that he is unwilling or unable to tell one half the things one wants to know. It is as much a matter of raising questions as of answering them: nobody is asking for an orgy of speculation (although in fact Mr. Painter isn't shy about applying a little amateur psycho-analysis from time to time). What is missing, rather, is a freer and fuller use of that incomparable source-book for the life of Proust, *A la Recherche* itself. This is one case where a good biographer also needs the insight and curiosity of a good critic (and indeed, I think that the best recent critical studies in English, by Howard Moss and Roger Shattuck, have taught me more about Proust's actual personality than Mr. Painter, and in considerably less space). Whole areas of the story are impoverished or sealed off if a biography sticks too closely to the external comings and goings.

Two examples, chosen more or less at random, must serve. There is no mention in Mr. Painter of Henri Poincaré (though there is in Proust, and also in Mr. Shattuck). Yet in an essay like "The Measure of Time"[1] the great mathematician is only a step away from *A la Recherche*:

> For an aggregate of sensations to have become a remembrance capable of classification in time, it must have ceased to be actual, we must have lost the sense of its infinite complexity, otherwise it would have remained present. It must, so to speak, be crystallised around a centre of associations of ideas which will be a sort of label. It is only when they thus have lost all life that we can classify our memories in time as a botanist arranges dried flowers in his herbarium.

[1] Available in *Science and Ideas*, ed. Arons and Bork (Prentice-Hall).

Poincaré was a celebrated figure in Proust's Paris, and his ideas were in the air. The intangibles of intellectual history like these are surely at least as relevant as recording what one Bibesco said to another, or keeping track of Proust's dinner-engagements (not that one wants to dispense with the chit-chat either).

The second instance is one which touches Proust's sense of himself more intimately. There are only fleeting references to Proust's Jewish ancestry in Mr. Painter's second volume, which at one level is logical: after all, once the Dreyfus Affair had died down there can have been very little formal documentation on the subject. But psychologically a man doesn't suddenly forget that he is half-Jewish in middle life. The references which Mr. Painter *does* give make Proust sound little more than the most crass kind of Jewish anti-semite; but it is plain from the novel that he was subject to a gnawing internal conflict. Think of Swann, think of Bloch, think of a hundred oddities beginning with the strange episode of Marcel's grandfather, who whenever the boy brought home a new friend would make out that the visitor was a Jew ("not usually of the best type"), and hum a few bars from *La Juive* or "Israel, break thy chain"—to Marcel's intense embarrassment, but without implying "any ill will whatsoever towards my friends." Or so Marcel hastens to assure us. But as Maurice Samuel has remarked, "if I were a mulatto and couldn't bring home a Negro friend without my all-white grandfather humming the tune of *Swannee Ribber* or *Old Black Joe*, I shouldn't by any means absolve the old man of ill will." Mr. Samuel, who has written more searchingly on this aspect of Proust than anyone else I know (see *Commentary*, March 1960), also makes it plain how entangled what he calls the "concealments" of the novel about race are with those about sexual deviation. For what applies to Proust the half-Jew applies even more to Proust the homosexual: no amount of corroborative evidence from the outside can tell us as much about his tensions as he himself has already revealed, obliquely.

Proust condemned Sainte-Beuve's biographical method, believing as he did that "a book is a product of a different self from the one we manifest in our habits, in society, in our vices." When he comes to this passage Mr. Painter glances rather anxiously over his shoulder, and then insists that "the biographer's task is to trace the formation and relationship of the very two selves which Proust distinguishes." But dwelling too minutely on this relationship can simply serve to stress how unbridgeable is the gulf between fact and imagination. It is a pity that Mr. Painter is so much on the defensive, that he hasn't been more boldly biographical and

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written a straightforward Life and Times. (The self manifested in "our habits, in society, in our vices" may not be the self which produces novels, but it is still undeniably interesting.) Either that, or a critical study. As it is, he is hobbled by his initial assumption that *A la Recherche* is a creative autobiography, a transparent *kunstlerroman*, rather than an autonomous work of art. In a secondary sense it is certainly autobiographical—what fiction is not? But it is only because in the first place it is a great novel in its own right that one wants to know about Proust's life anyway.

John Gross

Opting Out

Cabot Wright Begins. By JAMES PURDY. *Secker & Warburg*, 21s.

The Clown. By HEINRICH BÖLL, translated by LEILA VENNEWITZ. *Weidenfeld & Nicolson*, 25s.

The Garden of the Finzi-Continis. By GIORGIO BASSANI, translated by ISABEL QUIGLY. *Faber*, 21s.

THERE IS a German posture in attacking society, as there is an American and Italian, a French and an English one. To view existing society with pure hatred and fear, to see it altogether as the enemy, seems to me an especially German literary characteristic. There is a peculiar self-immolating recklessness about writers such as Jakob Lenz and Büchner and Kafka; they like to place their victim, isolated and in a state of total helplessness or clownhood, against Society, a monolith of greed, hypocrisy, and impregnable callousness.

The reader may remember the thesis of Jakob Lenz's *The Tutor*, that extraordinary *Sturm-und-Drang* comedy later re-vamped by Brecht. You treat a tutor purely as a menial, you closet him alone with your daughter as if he were a eunuch or a dog, and still you expect no harm to follow; and why should you not, since you make the rules? The tutor Lauffer disobeys the rules and seduces, or is seduced by, Major von Berg's daughter, when he should have been giving her her drawing lesson. He just escapes with his life, through the help of the village pastor, and then a year later finds himself on the point of seducing the pastor's own daughter. He is turned out, wanders like Lear through the stormy night, questioning God, and returns next morning announcing he has found the solution to his vocation—he has castrated himself. The pastor receives the news with great enthusiasm. It *is* the solution. He now sees the most golden prospects for the young man's future.

I think of this implacable German joke, because the joke in James Purdy's new novel, equally implacable in its American way, happens to be the precise opposite of it. What is Purdy's answer, or the answer of his hero, to the hated American way of life? It is not self-emasculation but rape; or, in moral terms, not to prostrate oneself before it as a victim but to adopt its ways, to turn it against itself. Purdy's Cabot Wright, born (though only "supposititously") into the role of the young upper-crust American (clean-cut and grey-flannel suited, Ivy-league university and Wall Street broker's office) is perpetually tired—tired, though he doesn't then know it, of the whole American way of life,

> of the young marrieds, the professional brief-case smarties, the sun-bathers from the Hamptons comparing their browns, the baseball addicts, race and fight pros, sports-car nuts, TV glaucoma people, jeans-wearing faggots of forty, ginger-beer voices of the off-track betting baboons.

To be cured of his tiredness he goes to a Brooklyn Heights quack, who hangs him naked on a padded hook, till his mind is filled with galloping gauchos and TV bullfights. The doctor cures him all too well; he becomes, to excess, the "tinglingly alive" young American that all the advertisements and the psychiatrists exhort him to be. He becomes, that is to say, an habitual rapist.

And for American society it *is* the solution. With true democratic feeling Cabot, as a rapist, neglects neither young nor old. Women not yet molested by Cabot begin to suffer status-worries. Sporting interest reaches nationwide proportions as his total of victims tops the hundred mark.

> He was called the Anonymous Coon, the Kosher Jack, the Eternal Tar Baby, working with his weapon into the far hours of the night....
>
> Cries go up as hallelujahs tell everybody it's happening again. Boats whistle, there is the rumble of the subway down in the guts of Brooklyn, a scavenger lets fall the lid of the garbage can, muggers drop their brass knuckles. "RAPIST IS OUT! ANONYMOUS COON STRIKES AGAIN."

In Cabot, the Great American Novel seems at last to have found its subject; a failing husband is ordered to rehabilitate himself by writing it, a failing Madison Avenue editor plans to recoup his fortunes by publishing it, the ghost-writers and other assorted ghosts flock twittering round their Achilles, their Don Juan in hell.

WHAT PURDY is doing in this novel, one might say, is to translate the act of swearing into actuality. He is saying "F—— America" (with all the ambiguity that is involved in swearing, that is, the invoking of what is most desirable

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or revered to express hostility) in the person of a hero who does literally that.

Cabot, having f——d America, out of pure indifference, though to the country's great delight and admiration, and having finally had his red-blooded Americanness and "Coon" vitality beaten out of him in a police-cell, experiences his first real human feeling. He lies down in the Brooklyn mud and laughs. He has, rather implausibly, come alive; and coming alive, for him, will mean taking immediate and permanent flight. The rest of Purdy's ghosts dissolve or die off farcically; they drink liquid cosmetic in mistake for Campari or die from contraction of the stomach after the sudden cutting-off of expense-account luncheons.

Purdy's high-camp black humour is certainly one of the most authentic things in American writing to-day. It is extraordinary the speed and precision, the zestful ferocity with which, in a sentence or a brief exchange of dialogue, he compasses extremes of absurdity and violence. This, for instance, is how his cuckolded tycoon, Mr. Warburton, taxes his wife with sleeping with her negro servant: "You smell like a Negro lately, and I wonder why?" His writing in general poises on the brink of precipices as bottomlessly comic as they are terrible. The chasms that open now and then in Angus Wilson gape continually here. Everything in his writing is ready for a fall; under stress his wrathful automata do not so much break down as burst, so that the stuffing runs out.

> Everything that had ever hurt him, everything that had cut and bruised and knifed and festered the flesh, the disappeared and forgotten blows, together with pus and lymph and canker seemed to burst and come out, as from a huge broken sluice.

He manages the oblique mechanics of his narrative, with its sub-plot of the "ghosting" of Cabot's story, and the assorted retrospects and documents, with marvellous ease. And if, in his vision and his ear for awful possibilities in dialogue, he reminds you of Angus Wilson, he is a very different writer, a fantasist with a liberated comic eloquence not present in Angus Wilson. I think the book slackens off a bit in its structure near the end; and if it is not the great anti-American novel, it is because, fundamentally, he is enjoying himself too much—a good thing, perhaps, when you think of what a too-compunctious sense of social duty did to Sinclair Lewis. His ghosts and monsters are annihilated all too easily. He shirks Cabot's coming-through-to-life, and his few other adumbrations of goodness and feeling, like his ghost-writing heroine, Zoe Bickle, are vague and perfunctory. He is content to be, very dazzingly, an inventor of nightmares, and has

6

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an air of saying, like Zoe Bickle, "I won't be a writer in a place and time like the present."

HANS SCHNIER, the hero of Heinrich Böll's *The Clown*, belongs to the family of Lenz's tutor, and Wozzeck, and Kafka's "K." In this German vision of things the enemy is not ghostly but all too solid; it is the solitary hero who, by its monolithic solidity, is reduced to ghostliness. Schnier is a professional entertainer, a cabaret clown, and is at present on the skids, having been deserted by Marie, his Catholic mistress, and having taken to the bottle. The problem for Schnier is that he is a natural non-joiner. He is a born monogamist, and would have married Marie, though he never shared her "metaphysical" distress at their unblessed union; one ceremony he could have gone through cheerfully, but to ask two of him—a civil and a religious one—no, it was too ludicrous. And this, in fact, is his trouble all round. Everyone in Germany, except him, seems to *belong* to something: to the Group of Progressive Catholics or the CDU or the Executive Committee of the Societies for the Reconciliation of Racial Differences (just as twenty years ago, though it's bad taste to say it, they belonged to the Party); if nothing else, they all know a man at the Ministry. His parents, he can never forget, sent his teenage sister to her death in 1945 by letting her join the "Flak." And then there's another thing. It's not enough for his friends to do things, or enjoy things, there has to be a programme attached to it.

> It is ghastly what goes on in the minds of Catholics. They can't even drink a good wine without somehow twisting and turning, they must at all cost be "aware" of how good the wine is, and why. As far as awareness is concerned, they are as bad as the Marxists.

Schnier can understand money, in terms of what it can buy, for instance cigarettes or cognac. What he can't understand is *abstract* money, things like "God," and "nation," and "Germany."

Down to his last few cigarettes and his last bottle of cognac, and "resting" after a series of professional flops, Schnier returns to his home city, Bonn, and begins ringing up his friends. One after another they find an excuse—something to do with all the things they belong to—for not helping, or before they reach the point of offering help he clowns the opportunity away. He finds as the hours go by, as his stock of cigarettes dwindles and the wall of indifference rises more impregnably round him, that his professional role of clown has become more and more his sole identity. His one remaining talent (apart from his symbolic gift of being able to smell the speaker at the other end of a telephone line) is his power to embarrass. And if this is his talent, he resolves to exploit it. He covers his face in a clown-mask of white lead, collects his guitar and a cushion, and goes out to beg on the steps of the railway station, where his ex-mistress and her husband, returning from their honeymoon, are sure to find him.

It's a neat and telling parable, with that clear cardboard cut-out quality you find in Frisch and Walser. Böll, like his hero, has a nose for what is pharisaic, cliquish, and self-justifyingly exclusive in the new Germany. He is very good on Bonn itself and the "martyred irony" with which the West Germans think it necessary to speak of this sleepy little city.

> Bonn has always had certain charms, drowsy charms, just as there are women of whom I can imagine that their drowsiness has charms. Of course Bonn cannot stand up to exaggeration, and people have exaggerated this town. A town which cannot stand up to exaggeration cannot be described: a rare quality, after all.

And he is good on all the different flavours of religious group-behaviour, the "baroque merriment" of the Group of Progressive Catholics and the complacent intolerance of Schnier's Evangelical mother: "I could well imagine how awful it must have been to be married to my mother, whose deceptive meekness was a meekness of i and e. She hardly ever said a sentence

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containing a, o, or u. . . ." It is recognisably the same Germany as the one in Martin Walser's *The Gadarene Club*; though Böll, I think, is a less subtle artist than Walser. There is something a little too obvious in the whole idea of casting Schnier as a professional clown. And the central structural device of the novel, the interleaving of the action with successive flashbacks, is a stock one—and being a stock one, it doesn't always fit. There is no organic reason, no reason in dramatic psychology, why a crucial flashback of Schnier's, how when they brought the news of his sister's death he had rushed out "like a madman" to make a bonfire of her possessions, should be withheld till the last pages in the novel.

If German writers characteristically put the blame on others, and Americans on themselves (on an American way of life that they feel responsible for), and if both, at their best, press their attack to extremes, the Italians have a tendency to soften asperities. The Italian novel, from Manzoni onwards, has been a thoroughly comfortable product; the golden haze of idyll and euphoria has hung about it. One notices something similar in the Italian films; they get the best of two worlds. English critics sometimes assume that since the *dolce vita* is under attack in these films, they must be representing it as empty and boring. In fact, to be honest, one would give a lot to have been at *any* of those parties in *La Dolce Vita* or the Antonioni films; and similarly the point of *I Vitelloni* was not that the young layabouts were bored with their idle existence, it was that they were fatally, though very understandably, enjoying it. If one thinks of Fellini and Antonioni as *attacking* idleness, then one has to say that they are hedging their bets.

Something similar is true of Giorgio Bassani. The theme of his earlier, and brilliant, *The Gold-Rimmed Spectacles* was the nemesis attending moral inertia, of pretending till too late that unpleasant things are simply not happening. In *The Garden of the Finzi-Continis* it is again Ferrara, with the same young Jewish narrator, and the period is once more 1938, the year of Mussolini's race-laws. Hitherto the social centre for the fashionable youth of Ferrara has been the tennis-club, and when pompous letters arrive from the president forbidding the presence of the narrator and his Jewish friends at the club, the Finzi-Continis, the grandest of the local Jewish families, throw open their private court. The narrator's father warns him against the Finzi-Continis; they are not his sort, he says, no good will come of his knowing them. He himself has always been irritated by the Finzi-Continis' self-sufficiency—the "preten-

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tious" house with its vast walled park, the private tutors for the children, and the exclusive 18th-century Spanish synagogue they have had restored for their own use. The narrator, none the less, falls in love with the great house, and with the daughter of the house, reviving an old *princesse lointaine* fantasy of his childhood. A summer idyll, ending in disillusionment, is played out against a background of the approaching Jewish tragedy.

It is the opinion of the hero's father that the Finzi-Continis secretly welcome the racial laws, for they flatter their own sense of self-sufficiency. He is arguing partly out of pique, for one of the things which has annoyed him about the Finzi-Continis has been the way, in the days when patriots like himself were staunch supporters of the fascist party, they so elegantly evaded all approaches from the fascists, indeed acted as if they didn't exist. All the same, as his son gradually realises, he is half right. If it is a stupidity on his own part to tell himself (or at least to think that it matters) that Mussolini is, after all, less of a criminal than Hitler, the cleverness of the Finzi-Continis is really a more dangerous folly. It has been their strength to pretend that unpleasant things are simply not happening—when, for instance, it is obvious that their son Alberto is dying of an organic disease, their show of noticing nothing is so perfect, the narrator can hardly believe the evidence of his eyes. But it is also their most fatal vanity and weakness.

Bassani's judgment on the Finzi-Continis is clear, but it hasn't stopped him, I feel, from writing a novel in which their values carry too much weight. The unstated fifth act of the drama is, of course, the extermination camps; and while it is the whole point that this fifth act should be remote and inconceivable to the participants in the drama, amid the laughter on the tennis courts and the leisurely Paschal feasts, it should be a presence—more so than I feel it is—for the reader. Too much of one's response to the novel (and here it is inferior to *The Gold-Rimmed Spectacles*) is a matter of sharing, nostalgically, in the dream of that great house and its eternal summer. He handles it all with high conventional competence and in delicious detail (though indeed it is the kind of thing we do very well, perhaps even better, in English—think of L. P. Hartley and Sybille Bedford). All the same, to make so comfortable a novel out of so grim a theme! It is characteristic of something equivocating and Arcadian in the whole Italian conception of fiction. Bassani has located the enemy accurately, but he judges it with a very un-German and un-American leniency.

P. N. Furbank

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PRESS

Notes on a Lady Mandarin

I have always secretly imagined that my life was being inscribed in the minutest detail on a giant tape recorder so that one day I should be able to play back the whole of my past life.... By my own hand and on paper I can only record my life in its rough outlines; I will make a book out of it. At thirty-five I hoped that one day my life would be read with deeply-felt curiosity; I wanted to become 'a famous author'. The small girl whose future has become my past exists no more.... How am I to retrieve her from the void of nothingness? LA FORCE DES CHOSES

THE THREE VOLUMES of Simone de Beauvoir's *Memoirs*[1] contain nearly a million words. The first volume—the story of the development of a "dutiful daughter" from a completely conventional home into an independent, spiritually free young woman who finds happiness and meaning in her work and in an intellectual marriage—has moved many readers (especially, I hear, many women). The emancipation of woman—a suppressed class hitherto bereft of its full power of development, and so described on the purely theoretical level in *The Second Sex*—is here expounded as a personal experience, as an example and a possibility. The death of her friend Zaza who was unable to master the tensions in her life that became too strong for her gave the story a tragic background against which success appeared not as a foregone conclusion but rather as a hard-won victory.

The second volume, *La Force de l'Age*, was a record of human relationships, experiences and travels, leading straight into war-time occupied France, and also into the discovery of politics as well as, in an unforgettable passage, death (her friend Bourla's deportation by the Nazis). One or two unpleasant qualities began to intrude: notably the tendency to tittle-tattle and the didactic urge, the latter so humourless on the erotic that she won the nickname "the teaching body" (*le corps enseignant*). The book contains several detailed justifications of the interest that "we" (*i.e.*, Sartre and the author herself) have taken in individual persons with their special problems: "The investigation of a particular case is more instructive than the general abstract answer." Curious, this emphatic insistence that they are both *really* interested in particular individuals!

These memoirs are curiously constructed rather along the lines of a *normalienne's* essay or academic thesis. After each major section the narrative is interrupted; the foregoing section is summarised, the conclusions drawn. In her introduction to the second volume the author declares that she has no use for gossip: "I hate *clabaudage*." But the revelations of the intimate concerns of her friends are hardly the soul of discretion. In the third volume where this feature of her writing is equally evident she herself remarks on it and argues, "I was not the one to start it." To whatever indiscretions of others this may refer, one has the impression that, once again, offence is considered the best self-defence.

Taken together, her books have achieved a huge circulation in many languages. I am saddened to think that all those people who have found their characters exposed or their views distorted in them have such limited opportunities of redress. In a hundred years' time, I am afraid that thesis-writers will still be drawing on these massive memoirs and on the slightly disguised earlier version in her novel, *The Mandarins*, to guide them in their enquiries into life as it was lived on the left bank of the Seine. Will this not, alas, emerge as the authentic picture of the ideologists and utopians of our time?[1]

MME DE BEAUVOIR INSISTS in *La Force des Choses* that *Les Mandarins* was not a *roman à clef*. Does she really expect us to believe that *"Espoir"* is not *Combat* and "Scriassine" not Koestler, even if she has successfully camouflaged Sartre and Camus? She does admit that the novel contains a description of her (by now) world-famous love affair with the American writer Nelson Algren. One is therefore rather surprised to find a detailed account in the new instalment of her life-story of this same affair which she had, after all, described as vividly and excitingly as one could wish in the novel. Here again, however, she has her didactic reasons. She writes:

> Although I have told this story very inexactly in *Les Mandarins* I have come back to it not out of any pleasure in the anecdotal, but in order to explore more closely a problem which in *La Force de l'Age* I had rashly presumed to have been solved: can there be a reconciliation between loyalty and freedom? And at what cost? Often preached, but seldom practised, perfect loyalty is usually seen as a mutilation by those who abide by it: they console themselves by sublimation or with drink... Sartre and I wanted "contingent love." The question remains, how would the third

[1] The first volume appeared in English in 1959 under the title of *Memoirs of a Dutiful Daughter* (André Deutsch and Weidenfeld & Nicolson, London; G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York); the second volume in 1963, as *The Prime of Life*. The third and final volume, *Force of Circumstance*, has just been published in London.

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persons involved reconcile themselves to our understanding.[2]

The clinical devotion to the accurate description of affairs is almost convincing. In the interest of the most thorough documentation one should mention Nelson Algren's recent book *Who Lost an American?* with his own portrait of a naïve woman of good will. Of Mme de Beauvoir's existentialism Algren remarks that it was "not a philosophy at all, but a means of living in freedom and happiness." It would seem that this is precisely what it was not.

The way in which this liaison and the affair with Jacques Lanzmann (and also, in the background, Sartre's relationship with women) are described is scarcely calculated to move the heart or quicken the imagination. Erotic pleasures are nothing if not momentary and immediate, and who can even preserve them in memory? How much more difficult to communicate them to others, except possibly through poetry, but least of all in a didactic chronicle full of politics, whisky, and even *fêtes du corps.* Was this all erotic bliss? One thinks of Byron's

My days are in the yellow leaf
The flowers and fruits of love are gone....

"MALVEILLANCE"—malevolence—is an expression that often recurs in the *Memoirs.* But what is malevolence on the part of others is reckoned only as critical justice from her. And in two cases her pen is so malevolent that the informed reader can only blush with shame. Oddly enough her victims are in both cases women whom this pioneer of feminine dignity doesn't hesitate to disparage (and one of the two is not in a position to defend herself).

First: Germaine Tillion. This well-known ethnologist, a member of the first *Résistance* group in Paris, was arrested and deported to Mauthausen. Still, despite her damaged health, she has travelled every year in her small car to Libya or Morocco, camping out in some village, and continuing her scholarly studies of North African language and customs. Her books on Algeria and its economic decline have been deservedly famous and her social work earned her the respect of both the French authorities and the *F.L.N.* She was able to save the lives of a number of Algerian nationalists who had been condemned to death, and, on one occasion, as the result of a mission which she conducted entirely on her own, she secured a long armistice during the "reign of mutual terror."[3]

If, apart from its use as a purely literary category, the term "*engagement*" suggests nobility or selflessness or usefulness, then Mme Tillion is the very model of the "engaged" person. Once without her knowledge *L'Express* published a detailed account written by her of her negotiations with Algerian terrorists. On this Simone de Beauvoir writes as follows in *La Force des Choses*:

> We all had supper at Marie-Claire's and tore to pieces the article by Germaine Tillion, which Bost, Lanzmann, and I consider a filthy piece of work....

From a woman whose contacts with the *Résistance* were of the most remote nature, who was completely unpolitical well into her maturity and whose knowledge of politics even now is confined to the black-and-white certainties of moral decisions, this seems a piece of polemical frivolity. No great damage has been done. Mme Tillion set it all right in an article in *Le Monde* (March 11th, 1964). At the end she dryly remarks that, as compared with the "tearing to pieces" that took place at that dinner, the cards she gets every year from three members of the present Algerian government who, thanks to her, were saved from execution, do offer a certain comfort....

The case of the other victim is quite different: she is Olga Ivinskaya. Simone de Beauvoir thought *Dr. Zhivago* a very bad book; it had taught her "nothing at all" about the Soviet Union. She also thinks that the Swedish Academy's *offer* of the Nobel Prize to Pasternak was a "deliberate provocation" of the Soviet Union. Later on she praises the Russian authorities for their current acknowledgment of Pasternak. In spite of the fact that previously she has found nothing "bad" in the Soviet Union, she now points out that everything is "good again." She writes: "There is no longer any official attack on Pasternak and if his former friend was sent to a camp—incidentally, only common lawbreakers are sent to camps today—it was because she trafficked in foreign currency."

[2] How one "third person" reconciled himself is suggested by Nelson Algren's comments (*Harper's,* May 1965): "Anybody who can experience love contingently has a mind that has recently snapped. How can love be *contingent*? Contingent upon *what*? The woman is speaking as if the capacity to sustain Man's basic relationship—the physical love of woman and man—were a mutilation; while freedom consists of 'maintaining through all deviations a certain fidelity'! What she means, of course, when stripped of its philosophical jargon, is that she and Sartre erected a façade of *petit-bourgeois* respectability behind which she could continue the search for her own femininity. What Sartre had in mind when *he* left town I'm sure I don't know....

"Mme de Beauvoir's early determination 'to write sacrificial essays in which the author strips himself bare without excuses' she has since employed with such earnestness that practically everybody has now been sacrificed excepting herself."

[3] See Germaine Tillion, "The Terrorist," ENCOUNTER, December 1958.

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Pasternak had known that his friend would be in serious danger after his death and this fear darkened the last months of his life. Not a word about the daughter who was also condemned. As for the currency transactions, Feltrinelli, Pasternak's first European publisher, has given an exact account of these; still to maintain that the sentence passed on Olga Ivinskaya was right and proper is more than a delusion. More than once the pressure of public opinion has helped to secure an amnesty for prisoners, and pressure, I am convinced, should never be relaxed. A "voice of France"—of a woman who is a famous author and who still approves of this sentence—carries weight. Surely an "engaged" writer must know that words are deeds.

An objection to the passage about Ivinskaya was made by Marie Craipeau, from Poland, in an article printed (December 5th, 1963) in the weekly *France Observateur*. She asked where Simone de Beauvoir got her information. Sartre replied to this in a deplorable letter to *France Observateur* (December 12th, 1963), which, some think, will always remain one of the strangest documents of his career. Using abusive language more violent than anything he has ever indulged in before, he writes:

> "What right have you to question what Simone de Beauvoir has written about Pasternak's companion? Have you been in the Soviet Union? Have you carried out an enquiry, as we have? Nowadays it is quite naïve to be possessed by a preconceived suspicion of the Soviet Union. Like the Pavlovian dog that slavers at the sound of a bell you slaver when you hear the name of the Soviet Union."

This is again the Sartre who, in an unfinished essay on "The Communists and Peace" (published in *Temps Modernes* on the occasion of an unsuccessful strike which the workers had boycotted and which was later repudiated by the Party), established with the utmost clarity that the French proletariat is identical with the Communist Party, and the Communist Party with Stalin—so that anyone who criticises Stalin is inevitably an enemy of the people. Then it was amusing, an abstract joke; but here the victim is specific and real. And was there ever an "enquiry"? Surely it never took place except along the lines of: "Surkov told me himself...." It is not worth while to quote what Mme de Beauvoir has written about Ignazio Silone (who made a humorous reply in the January 1964 *Preuves*), about Arthur Koestler, Manès Sperber, David Rousset, and many others. In her second volume Simone de Beauvoir wrote that "I prefer passing judgment on people to trying to understand them"; and we gladly credit her with a piece of accurate self-knowledge. All the same, it is worth mentioning in passing that she has falsely accused the publisher Bompiani of not having paid Sartre his full royalties in Italy and has attributed to him views that he has in fact never expressed. Bompiani, who is a true *gentiluomo*, corrected her statements, concisely and politely, in *Temps Modernes* (August–September (1963) and drew from her the reply that the facts as published by her had been reported to her by this-or-that Italian writer: "Let them fight it out between themselves." As we know, she hates gossip.

THERE REMAINS the case of Albert Camus, who was Mme de Beauvoir's and Sartre's closest friend. One can read in Sartre's *Situations IV* (Gallimard, 1964) the polemical attack that dissolved the friendship and also the fine obituary notice in which Sartre did full justice to his friend and foe. What Mme de Beauvoir has said includes some manifest inaccuracies which Jean Bloch-Michel, who was on the staff of *Combat* at the time, has meanwhile publicly corrected (*Preuves*, January 1964). Mme de Beauvoir, whose judgments are normally so narrowly political, puts a personal interpretation on the fact that Camus quarrelled violently with Merleau-Ponty because the latter had stated in a book that, "objectively speaking," Bukharin was a traitor and that the Moscow trials had been necessary. "Why this quarrel?" she writes. "I think that Camus was depressed because he felt that his golden years were coming to an end." After the death of Camus she mourned for the Camus of an earlier period who had been her friend, and for herself who had now lost a part of her youth—but not, she insists, for the later Camus who had taken the "wrong attitude" to the Algerian war.

IN THE SECOND VOLUME the tittle-tattle was concentrated on a few persons and it had its interest amidst the unfolding of complicated personal relationships. But here in the third volume, *les choses* whose *force* she describes are supremely trivial.

> I make a very full note of the details that are called trivial. Not only are they the reality which evokes the physical presence of a person or an age, but by their very non-significance they provide a touchstone of truth itself. They point to nothing beyond themselves and the only reason for emphasising them is that they have existed—and that is sufficient.

This theory of the value of the banal must come as rather a surprise in view of the violent attacks which this volume contains on the *Nouveau Roman* and in particular on Nathalie Sarraute (another writer who has fallen from grace). The mass of detail is not as in Sartre's *Nausée* an expression of the oppressive presence of objects but rather a cosy absorption in trivialities and

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the abandonment of any kind of discrimination. Torture in Algeria, a journey to Rome, a double Scotch: all facts are equal, and the only interesting thing about them presumably is that they all happened to the author. Thus, she mentions English-language authors she has just discovered —Thomas Wolfe and Peter Cheyney. Previously she listed the films she had seen and in a footnote she gave the titles of everything that was on in the cinemas that year. Where the only criterion is what the author experienced, these memoirs do in fact become rather like the giant tape recorder for which she once yearned. In the case of important events this complete lack of judgment, this indifference to values, where only the relationship to the author's own person is important, is even more striking than in more trivial affairs. The following entry is from Venice:

> Headlines in the Italian papers: DIRTY HANDS [*Les Mains Sales*]. The reference is to the execution of Nagy and Maleter. Why? We discuss the problem endlessly without understanding it. This is disastrous for France since the Communists will now become even more isolated, the Left demoralised, and Gaullism intensified. The counter-demonstration today will be lacking in enthusiasm. And Sartre—who wanted so much to forget politics for few days!

In a word: Nagy executed. Poor Sartre.

"We discuss endlessly"—the phrase recurs. "We discussed Hiroshima for a long time." "The editorial committee often meets and has violent discussions." "We discussed Koestler a little. Amazing how we always land up in the same conversation." "Evening with Sartre and Bost. We discussed events." Were the discussions very interesting? There is always agreement with Sartre in any case: "He often finishes a sentence that I have begun." Those with whom they disagree all gradually disappear from the circle. They only see their friends and only confirm one another's opinions. They were all convinced that de Gaulle could not end the Algerian war and could not crush the *O.A.S.*— they even believed he had entered into an alliance with that organisation. So many things have turned out differently—but that does not mean that anything has to be thought through all over again. Meanwhile there are new issues on which left-minded persons can agree. Francis Roland, one of the group, changes his opinions. Comment: "He has come into money and become a Gaullist."

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE trivial presupposes an interest in the accuracy of details. But there is in this internationalist woman a very French and, possibly, aristocratic trait: she never takes the trouble to spell names correctly. (Things are a bit better in the Anglo-American edition.) Doesn't her publisher, Gallimard, have any proof-readers? They have passed the most flagrant errors: Robert Schumann always stands for Schuman, Tillon for Tillion, A. Koethly for Anne Kethly (does she even remember who this is?), Walbert for Waldberg, Guelderohde for Ghelderode, Lummumba for Lumumba, Einsenhower for Eisenhower, Beuber Newmann for Buber Neumann. The greater the detail the less care is expended on it.

SIMONE DE BEAUVOIR looks back in sorrow. She now regards her most fulfilled years as lost, feels that nothing remains. After the self-creation of man in freedom by the "Project," the inescapable destiny of ageing and dying has now forced itself upon her. Where she dwells on this there is a different tension, even a different language, and it reminds us that the argumentative Lady Mandarin was also the author of that very good novel, *L'Invitée*. Recently her account of the death of her mother has appeared in *Temps Modernes*, and as a book, and in it she says that for her every death is a violent intrusion and an intolerable injustice: as far as she is concerned, the time has gone when Sartre explained how it is only mortality that gives life its shape and meaning.

To age, to die; she takes a candid look at her face in the mirror and gives a frightening description of it. Sartre, who began his own memoirs with *Les Mots*, writes: "I do not know what I am living for" and he tells her (this is quoted in *La Force des Choses*), "*La littérature c'est de la merde*" (a *résumé* of his later interview in *Le Monde*).[4] She herself speaks of the meaninglessness of everything, now it is all moving towards the close; and with every friend who dies, Camus, Richard Wright, Merleau-Ponty, the world contracts irretrievably.

Sartre expresses his despair with so much temperament and verve that he belies himself. It is like his renunciation of literature in the very year in which with *Les Mots* and *Situations IV* he has once again become the centre of literary attention. For long stretches *La Force des Choses* is a gloomy book, whereas *Les Mots* is fascinating and reads as if it were written in one brilliant stroke. Sartre wrote to accuse the child that he once was and to show that, in spite of everything, he did become the famous "*homme de lettres*" his grandparents expected. He considers this success "a failure" but when he curses literature he also blesses it whereas to Simone de Beauvoir who, at the close of her memoirs breaks into a hymn of praise for the Word as the only "transcendence," as the only

[4] See "Interview with Sartre" in ENCOUNTER, June 1964.

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link between men, and man's only shelter and home, they are lifeless words.

One has only to read his description in *Situations IV* of a walk in Venice in the rain or the study on Wols, to see what Sartre is capable of in his moments of inspiration. Simone de Beauvoir vaguely hopes that somebody sometime will remember particular words that she has joined together. Even in his monologues there is tension in Sartre's writing, and he has the resources of an effective playwright at his command. Simone de Beauvoir's despondency is leaden (though no less honest and true on that account): "The story that befell me is not my own, I thought. I was the helpless spectator of the sport of foreign powers. History, Time, Death...." She continues: "I hated the world to which I belonged. I was banished from the future by the act of growing old. Robbed nerve by nerve of the past, my life is contracting to my own immediate present. What an icy coldness!"

This note has already been sounded earlier: "One day I said to myself, I am forty. When I had recovered from the surprise, I was fifty. The astonishment that took hold of me then still persists." What remains of all the splendours she has seen? "The Peking opera; the arena at Huelva; the dawn in Provence; Tiryntha; Castro speaking to 500,000 Cubans; a sulphurous sky above a sea of clouds; copper beeches; the white nights of Leningrad; the bells of the *Libération*; an orange moon over the Piraeus; a red sun in the desert; Torcello; Rome...?" "If I had only begotten a hill or a rocket [she uses the masculine word "*engendrer*": to beget]. As it is, nothing has happened. I see the coppice of nut trees with the wind passing over it, and the promises that enthralled me when I saw this gold mine at my feet, the life that was mine to live. The promises have been kept. All the same I look back with an unbelieving glance at this believing child and realise with bewilderment how greatly I have been deceived."

THESE ARE THE book's last words. What a cheerless epilogue for a life that has seemed such a model or such unattainable good fortune to so many! From total absorption in universal political struggles to this state of confinement to the transient self.... In *The Second Sex* everything that characterises woman as woman—from seductive charm to motherhood—was unmasked as part of the slave-mentality created by man. And it is true: many women, especially the more creative, do in their later years often experience a new sense of fulfilment and assurance and see it as a phase in their lives with a value all its own. Simone de Beauvoir sees nothing of the kind in her life. One is reminded of Knut Hamsun's last comment: "The years bring no wisdom, only old age...."

Some French critics have noted with sorrow or with malicious pleasure that Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir have been compelled to admit having come to the end of their tether philosophically and have confessed failure. Will a Voltaire be moved again to make a last confession?

Those who have a tranquil and useful philosophy of age and death are to be envied, but I wonder why it is only in these final pages of her book that there is a density of expression which is otherwise conspicuously lacking. She mourns well for herself and for her intimate friends—but otherwise people are either "the masses," like Castro's audience of five hundred thousand (to what extent has politics for Mme de Beauvoir been merely part of the aesthetic pleasure of the traveller and the tourist?), or the representatives of mistaken ideas.

Simone de Beauvoir supports the death penalty for political crimes, and after the war she was in favour of the execution of all those French "*miliciens*" who had blood on their hands. The idea was apparently that once the world had been rid of this polluted race of men, there would be no more murderers and torturers left. Eternal illusion! Between the happiness of the abstract masses and the destruction of the abstract villains, humanity is reserved for a privileged few: one's own little circle.

Mme de Beauvoir has been criticised for never criticising herself; but self-criticism implies a detachment in which there is room for humour, and whatever merits she may possess as a writer, humour is certainly not one of them. Her extensive memoirs are marked by an astonishing measure of humourlessness. One might make allowances for the inaccuracies and the injustices if they were the by-product of sheer high spirits. But they are offered with great solemnity as a message from the spirit of the age.

Those who attach transcendent importance to words must be taken at their word, and words are used here without any feeling of detachment from either the age or the self. Has there never been anything about the farcical comedy enacted by "Engaged Intellectuals" in the corners of the great political stage that might have wheedled a smile of self-irony out of her?

In *The Mandarins* there still seemed to be a hope that this might happen and the novel remains the best part of the memoirs of her maturity. Here in *La Force des Choses* there is no comedy, but "many nails clawing at inflated balloons," as she writes of her own aggressiveness. We could share her sorrow over a waning life if only we caught her once mocking herself.

François Bondy

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LETTERS

"The Teach-In"

ANTHONY HARTLEY's sad little piece about the Oxford teach-in on Viet Nam [ENCOUNTER, August] affords me a faint pleasure. Not, of course, the pleasure one derives from fair reporting or penetrating analysis; it is simply that I am pleased to find myself among those trouble-makers who during the past decade or so have aroused his indignation. Haunted by marches, petitions, sit-downs and rallies—in short, by continuous communal activity and criticism of the régime—he now has to stomach the new, subversive teach-in.

It is Mr. Hartley's claim that we, the organisers of the Oxford teach-in, gave precedence to political protest over scholarly examination of the evidence. This is easy to refute. He himself mentions the sober interventions of Ian Adie, Evan Luard, Geoffrey Hudson and Saul Rose, all scholars of high reputation. And whether or not he agrees with their opinions, he would be hard pressed to deny that Wayland Young, James Fawcett, Ian Brownlie, Eric Hobsbawm, Walter Goldstein, K. W. Wedderburn and John Gittings are intelligent, well-informed speakers.

As for the politicians we invited, Mr. Hartley has doubtless failed to calculate that five of those present—Michael Stewart, Eldon Griffiths, Henry Cabot Lodge, the Ambassador of South Viet Nam, and Evan Luard—are supporters, broadly speaking, of the Anglo-American Governmental standpoint on Viet Nam. Only one, William Warbey, disagrees with it. Which only goes to show, no doubt, what naïve planners of a "political protest" we were!

But I suspect that Mr. Hartley is no longer open to conviction. Angered by popular dissent, he can see only a sinister conspiracy behind the fact that a large part of the audience at Oxford showed itself sceptical or hostile towards the Government position. But worse! He sees foreign malefactors infiltrating the Union with diabolical intentions, just as he no doubt sees South Viet Nam being subverted by outside Powers. But why should the hecklers have been planted by the organisers? Is it not within the bounds of credibility that they brazenly planted themselves?

Further developing his charge that the organisers lacked impartiality *qua* organisers, Mr. Hartley rashly quotes a letter sent to *The Guardian* by Professor Max Beloff. The truth is not to my mind as Professor Beloff presented it. By committing himself to a partisan statement early in the proceedings, and by speaking with palpable emotion, he put his own authority as chairman in jeopardy, It was this aspect of the matter which disturbed us, not the opinions he expressed. As a matter of fact, Michael Stewart and others later repeated Beloff's point about the desirability of teach-ins in Hanoi, Moscow, and Peking without exciting a murmur of protest.

Mr. Hartley earns no higher dividends by quoting Professor Beloff's second allegation, that speakers for the Government side were not given a fair hearing while he was chairman. The truth is quite opposite. Afternoon speakers, mainly scholars, were heard out in what seemed to us a depressing silence. A tape recording exists to prove this.

Like other commentators hostile to the Oxford teach-in (notably Professor Beloff), Mr. Hartley tries to have it both ways. On the one hand the audience, or part of it, refused to hear the Government's point of view; on the other, Michael Stewart was listened to in rapt silence. Can both these propositions be advanced with equal force? Listeners to the Third Programme can testify that the atmosphere at Oxford remained throughout one in which a fruitful debate could be conducted. Not a voice was raised throughout the South Vietnamese Ambassador's speech.

Mr. Hartley numbers among those who get very upset when they witness the muddle-headed crowd banding together and making irresponsible noises about matters which are properly the province of Governments. In which case, I fear, he must brace himself for yet another decade of irritations. Meanwhile he will have his "power politics," "realities of power" and "power struggles" to reassure him that his own values remain in the ascendant.

DAVID CAUTE

All Souls College,
Oxford

1. I AM SORRY to disappoint David Caute, but I remain unhaunted by "continuous communal activity and criticism of the régime"—whatever that may mean. Nor would I dignify any feature of the Oxford University teach-in by using the words "subversive" or "sinister conspiracy." As I tried to say in my article, it all seemed very much the tail-end of the protest of a decade. If Mr. Caute regards it as a symptom of "popular dissent," that only shows in what a narrow circle he moves.

2. The holding of the teach-in was a political protest that back-fired. I can understand why Mr. Caute does not want to admit this, but the fact remains. My objection was not to any weighting of the programme, but to the presence among the audience of a *claque*, some of whom did not appear to be members of Oxford University. The organisers may not have been concerned with this, but they must bear responsibility for the behaviour of stewards, whom they chose and who took every opportunity to act as cheer-leaders to the *claque* on the benches.

3. I never said that Mr. Stewart was listened to "in rapt silence." I wrote that he "dominated an audience that included an implacably hostile minority." This does not mean that there were no attempts to interrupt. There were, but he wore them down.

4. Professor Beloff needs no defence from me, but to describe his remark on the desirability of "open discussion of the question of Viet Nam" in Moscow and Peking as "partisan" casts considerable light on the curious perspective in which Mr. Caute views the world around him. He is, of course, at liberty to think what he likes, but he

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really must not accuse of bias everyone who refuses to share his particular astigmatism. Since the Oxford teach-in he has claimed that the B.B.C. and Ian Trethowan were not impartial, that Professor Beloff was partisan, and that I am "no longer open to conviction." That is quite good going, but it might have been simpler for Mr. Caute to hold a teach-in by himself or in the presence of some few carefully chosen disciples. Then at least he could have been sure of favourable publicity.

ANTHONY HARTLEY

London

MR. CAUTE asserts that I failed to show impartiality from the Chair during the Oxford teach-in. Surely he will admit that anti-American speakers got a better hearing while I was in the Chair than Mr. Cabot Lodge did while Mr. Christopher Hill was presiding. With regard to my own comment, I feel no compunction at all. I was informed by the organisers that the opening address would be given by Professor Walter Goldstein, who would simply describe the "teach-in movement in America" as a background to our proceedings. Instead of this, Mr. Goldstein made a partisan political speech trying to raise cheap laughs at the expense of his own President and our Prime Minister. By so doing, he destroyed my illusion that the teach-in was genuinely intended as an impartial discussion of the tragic political and moral problem of the war in Viet Nam. Perhaps I should have had no illusions, but the very fact that the idea of teach-ins in the Communist countries was regarded as outrageous is to my mind a conclusive proof of the bias of the organisers, and of a large part of the audience. Whatever may be the case in the United States, it is clear that the teach-in in Britain is simply a new vehicle for political protest of a drearily familiar kind.

MAX BELOFF

Oxford

"What is a Jew?"

IN describing the paradoxical nature of official Israeli definitions of "Jewishness" as the basis for a claim to Israeli citizenship, J. L. Talmon's "Who is a Jew?" [ENCOUNTER, May] also reveals the very temporal quality of all such definitions of Jewish "nationality" or religious affiliation. Each one of them is indeed rooted in a given historical situation; once this situation has ceased to exist, the definition that it suggested ceases to be truly valid.

If the Israeli Supreme Court had decided that Brother Daniel "was still a Jew, but for national-historical reasons," it would thus have granted recognition, on the one hand, to Sartre's argument that one is a Jew insofar as one is treated as a Jew by an anti-semite, and, on the other hand, to the arguments of certain agnostic Jewish nationalists who believe in a Jewish "race" rather than in a Jewish faith. The dissenting judge's opinion suggests, moreover, that one can be a Jew by personal choice, like certain non-Jewish anti-Nazis who, in Nazi Germany, insisted on registering, out of protest, as Jews under the Nürnberg laws, or like the Italian peasants of the Monte Garganico who became converts to Judaism and, shortly after the last war, emigrated *en bloc* to Israel.

Because definitions of the Jew have varied, through the ages, even in orthodox Rabbinical tradition, we now have a number of scrupulously traditionalist or "orthodox" Jewish communities, whether in Israel or in the Diaspora, which do not enjoy the full recognition of Israel's "majority" orthodox Rabbinate. In some periods of Jewish history, for instance, the orthodox Rabbinate accepted somewhat broadly the principle of conversion to Judaism. We thus know that most North African Jews are descended in part from Berber converts. The Falashas or "Black Jews" of Abyssinia are likewise descendants of converts; according to legend, the Queen of Sheba, on her return from Solomon's court, converted her subjects to Judaism as it was practised in that age. The Judaism of the Falashas has thus remained faithful to certain ancient practices which are no longer accepted elsewhere in the Jewish world.

Other Jewish communities have lived at various times in a slave-owning economy and strictly obeyed *Deuteronomy's* injunction to the effect that a Jew may not tolerate idolatry, in the first place, in his own home, and that, in the second place, a slave who is a Jew must be liberated after seven years of service. In India, for instance, Dravidian slaves were often converted to Judaism and adopted in their Jewish master's family. The so-called "Black Jews" of Cochin, on the Malabar Coast, were thus descended in part from such liberated slaves. In the British West Indies, there have likewise existed isolated groups of Negro Jews: Harry Belafonte has claimed to be of Jewish descent. In its list of those who may or may not be accepted as converts to Judaism, *Deuteronomy* mentions almost exclusively nations that no longer exist, without naming most of those that Jews have known in the past two thousand years. Orthodox Jews have therefore failed to agree on the subject of acceptable conversions. (Of all nations listed as acceptable in *Deuteronomy*, only the Egyptians might still provide acceptable proselytes!)

According to Talmudic doctrine as it is now generally accepted, most converted or "Black Jews" cannot be recognised as real Jews because:

(*a*) they are descended, at least in part, from a female ancestor who was not of the Chosen People or a regular convert,

(*b*) the Judaism that they practise differs in many cases from that which is proposed by the mainstream of Talmudic tradition.

The majority of Israel's Rabbinate agrees to defend only one concept of "orthodox" Judaism: Talmudic Judaism as it has been practised during the past ten centuries in most areas of the Christian and Islamic Diaspora. This concept of Judaism excludes several older forms of Jewish practice and tradition: the religion of the Samaritans, the pre-Talmudic Judaism of the Falashas, the die-hard opposition to Talmudic Judaism that has survived among the Karaites, and even, to some extent, the older Talmudic Judaism of the Beni-Israël of India, who were known to have accepted, at least until

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quite recently, inter-marriage with the sons and daughters of converts.

In addition, Israel's Rabbinate also condemns the "watered down" Judaism of Reformed or Liberal Western communities as well as the "agnostic" Judaism of those who claim to be Jews for "national" rather than religious reasons or simply because they feel that they are still Jews in the eyes of anti-semites.

THE WHOLE PROBLEM of the definition of the Jew, in terms of "orthodox" tradition, thus boils down to one of agreement on a *terminus ab quo* and a *terminus ad quem*. Those who practise Judaism as it had once been practised *before* the Talmudic *terminus ab quo* or as it has been "reformed" after the Jewish Enlightenment's *terminus ad quem* indeed fail to be accepted as Jews in the eyes of Israel's "official" Rabbinate. Falashas, Karaites, Beni-Israël, Harry Belafonte, all Reformed, Liberal or "agnostic" Jews, and most North African Jews might thus find themselves excluded from the fold, together with most Jews of Russian or Polish origin too, since even the most "orthodox" Ashkenazi Jews of Israel's Rabbinate cannot possibly prove that they do not have an unconverted female Chazar from the Steppes of Tartary among their many ancestors. Only a few Yemenites and other Sefardim from equally ancient and isolated communities might still claim to be real Jews.

Such a situation is patently absurd, especially in Israel. The problem posed by official Talmudic tradition arises moreover because Israel's Rabbinate insists on conceiving Judaism *only* as it was defined in the Diaspora by the Talmud and its commentators. But the purpose of these definitions was to preserve, by spiritual or legal "frontiers", the identity of a people which had been deprived of its geographical homeland. Today, the Jews of Israel again have a homeland: its geographical frontiers cannot possibly coincide with the spiritual or legal frontiers of orthodox Talmudic tradition. We already have Israeli citizens who happen to be Christians or Mohammedans and also orthodox Jews of the Diaspora who happen not to be Israeli citizens. In Israel, there exists even a community of strictly orthodox Talmudic Jews who refuse to recognise the Israeli State because it has been established *before* the actual coming of the Messiah. In over three thousand years of its history, Judaism has undergone an evolution, leaving here and there communities which remained faithful to its obsolete forms.

Today, in Israel, orthodox Talmudic Judaism has become obsolete too, like most of the even older forms of Judaism that it rejects. If only because it has now been proven impossible to define a Jew in terms of "orthodox" Judaism, Israel faces, in the near future, an agonising choice: it must either accept Talmudic orthodoxy and refuse citizenship or freedom of religion to the vast majority of Jews, or else it must reject Talmudic orthodoxy and thus become a nation in which religion, as in most other modern nations, subsists only as a matter of individual choice or belief.

EDOUARD RODITI

Paris

Art and Iniquity

IN THE DECEMBER issue of ENCOUNTER, Professor Richard Wollheim wrote:

> "Grants to museums and galleries... must be raised if our institutions are not to be priced out of the market and if (as I sincerely hope) we don't resort to the iniquitous American system whereby increasingly museum purchases are in the hands of rich private individuals disposing of public money which has been handed to them by the state under the euphemism 'tax concessions.'"

What a Pandora's box these statements open! That market is largely the creation of the British and American treasuries through the taxes they impose on the one hand and the tax concessions they offer on the other. More than anything else, the complementary policies our governments adopt towards death duties, income levies, and purchase grants enforce the sale of major works of art and establish the prices they fetch.

The British government, I am told, uses death duties to discourage the export of great works of art. If a collector has left such works to members of his own family or has sold them to a museum, their value can be deducted from his estate before the duties are computed. Unfortunately, there may also have been a stately home, taxable but not saleable, or the duties on the balance of the estate are so high that his executors are forced to dispose of the works of art. Since museums in Britain have limited funds for acquisition, in the end some great works of art eventually do go to foreign collectors.

The American government is not concerned to keep art in the country but does wish to benefit public institutions. Only what has been given to them can be deducted from the estate. One simplified example will explain how this works. A bachelor's estate consists of an art collection worth $500,000 and securities worth $500,000. If he has left everything to his heirs, after paying the federal death duties they will receive the collection and $175,000. However, if he has left the collection to a museum, the death duties will be greatly reduced. The collection becomes the bachelor's monument, and his heirs will receive exactly twice as much money, $350,000. The bachelor could of course sell the collection and leave his heirs the proceeds. But after he has paid the capital gains taxes, the increase in the inheritance might be relatively small, perhaps only another 20 per cent. The loss of the "monument" would be absolute. It is the man who gets the monument that writes the will.

In America, as in England, some public money is spent every year to purchase works of art. In England, I understand, the government makes purchase grants out of tax revenue. In America, there is comparatively little direct government support of museums. Virtually all of this comes from rates, and traditionally none of it is spent for purchases. Instead the Federal government delegates to certain public institutions (including museums) what amounts to a limited, indirect, and closely supervised right to collect income taxes. For example, a bachelor with a gross income of $100,000

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Hamburg

THE *small civil war between the Government and the Intellectuals goes on. First, Chancellor Erhard protested at the interference of "decadent" writers in German political life. Günter Grass (who has been campaigning for the SPD) was a "tin drummer" and Rolf Hochhuth (who has been snapping at West German economic inequality) a "kleiner pinscher" (little terrier), and he, the Bundeskanzler, had no interest in exchanging words with such "fools and ignoramuses." Then, Grass waxed indignant at the revival of Goebbels' vocabulary about "decadent art." The philosopher Ernst Bloch was saddened at the degeneration of language and accents. Peter Weiss foresaw a new era of class struggle. Professor Dolf Sternberger wondered how the sincere and noble author of* The Deputy *could be called a kind of dog. Heinrich Böll was pained at the whole spectacle. Martin Walser and Uwe Johnson said they wouldn't sink to the current level of debased word-slinging. But, at the German première of his play,* The Amen Corner, *played by American Negroes, James Baldwin said: "Why, I would be happy to be a little pinscher! . . ."*

DIE ZEIT

Louisiana

PRISON *officials have stopped the correspondence between a Negro under sentence of death and a Swedish woman because the two are of different races. "Please be advised that you have been denied correspondence privileges," Raymond P. Leblanc, Angola prison's assistant director of classification, wrote Mrs. Johansson. "Under existing rules and regulations set forth by the office of the warden in keeping with the laws of the state of Louisiana, correspondence is not permitted unless the correspondents are of the same race."*

Asked whether any white person would be allowed to write to a Negro prisoner, Acting Warden H. L. Hanchey told a reporter: "If it was a business contact, it's okay. Otherwise I've never known it to happen. If I knew it, it would not be allowed."

NEW YORK HERALD TRIBUNE

Bonn

A SPECIAL *task force of the Bavarian criminal police arrested to-day a 20-year-old son of a former SS man who, they said, is responsible for the recent anti-Semitic swastika smearings in Bamberg. The police swooped down on Reinhard Woitzik, an unemployed dental technician, in his mother's apartment in Bamberg. There they found a copy of William Shirer's* The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich, *from which, they said, Woitzik had clipped pictures and drawings used in the desecration of Jewish tombstones. The book had been stolen from a library in Erlangen.*

NEW YORK TIMES

Peking

PROLETARIAN LOVE *is purer than middle-class love, according to a Communist Chinese magazine, "Chinese Woman," which is quoted as saying: "Young people now need revolutionary emotions of the proletariat, not the vulgar soft perceptions of the bourgeoisie." It described "vulgar soft perceptions" as: "Walking with the loved one arm in arm, in parks and on streets, in cinemas, at dances, in restaurants; also, caressing, fondling, gazing at each other and prattling about love."*

The magazine advises a girl selecting her "revolutionary partner" (husband) that she must "begin from the angle of political factors first of all, because otherwise true love cannot be found."

DAILY MAIL

Paris

STUNTS *may be a way of life to the fashion trade, but there will be wide support for the decision of Jacques Heim, the French couturier, to have authors and musicians of many countries as the theme of this year's collection. A number of creations are given a name from the world of letters or music. From the standpoint of the purchaser, it adds an extra dimension to the opportunities for self-expression. Should she choose the delectable creation that sets off her willowy figure to the best effect, or give full rein to her artistic preference? If the latter, whom should she select? Should she go straight for quality—Mozart or Tolstoy, say—or should her choice give more evidence of individual taste, Kipling perhaps (though it is hard to see the relevance of white silk edged mink to the* Barrack Room Ballads *or the White Man's Burden)?*

The presence of Dickens and Kipling, and the absence of Shakespeare and Chaucer suggest a reluctance to rise to a challenge. And what is a man to make of a lady who arrives clad in Baudelaire?

THE TIMES

Sofia

THE *General Director of the Bulgarian Circuses explained here to-day, according to the* Fatherland Front, *that "the Bulgarian circus participates actively in the creation of our socialist culture and in the struggle for the ideological purity of our art against formalism, abstractionism, and bourgeois influences. The responsibility of a Clown is a very great one. In general, it is ideological in nature and involves the solution of certain social-political problems. Of some seventy circus numbers, twenty are mainly concerned with the struggle against bourgeois influences. . . ."*

DIE WELT

Tokyo

EDOGAWA RAMPO, *a well-known Japanese mystery story writer, died on Wednesday in Tokyo. Born Taro Hirai, he took as his pen name the phonetical reading of Edgar Allan Poe.*

THE TIMES

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will have to pay Federal income taxes of $60,000, leaving him a net of $40,000. Assume that he owns a work of art bought years ago for a smaller sum and now worth $30,000. If he gives this to a museum, his gross income, though actually unaffected, will be considered in computing taxes to have been diminished by $30,000, the current value of his gift. Accordingly, Federal taxes will be so reduced that his net income will be not $40,000 but $62,400.

Obviously this system encourages not only giving but buying. Gifted and knowledgeable Americans buy what pleases them, and any museum is delighted to accept what they have selected. The merely well-intentioned often send in a cheque to help the museum buy what it wants, or they buy for later giving what the museum recommends. Though ultimate control of this process rests with the Internal Revenue Service, effective control truly is in the hands of the museum staff. American museums are local institutions. For reasons of tact, one central fact is never publicly admitted. All but the smallest, the newest, and the weakest museums turn down as many gifts as they accept. And, to their honour, they do (though cautiously) refuse gifts offered by famous and experienced collectors, as well as presents proposed by aspiring neophytes. To this extent, Professor Wollheim is right. It is often private individuals who one way or another pay for those expensive works of art. It is always the museums that sooner or later receive them.

"Iniquitous"? For whom? Cézanne painted three versions of the *Grandes Baigneuses*. Two were acquired some thirty and forty years ago by Americans at a comparatively low cost. Because of tax concessions, both have long been in public hands. The National Gallery recently acquired the third for £500,000. Since, as Professor Wollheim sees it, all three were bought with public money, the important questions are, under which system has the public enjoyed the possession of a *Grandes Baigneuses* the longest, and under which system did the public pay less for the value it received?

Buying such paintings while they are still cheap requires more than generous treasury grants and a forward-looking museum staff. The greatest of professional art collectors was probably Wilhelm von Bode, the Director in Berlin before and after World War I. All during his prime he was in effect a personal employee of the Kaiser. He believed "any Museum Director who does not make one mistake out of every five purchases is not doing his job." Answerable as he is to some committee of eminent amateurs, no modern museum director can plunge to that degree. Like Veblen's millionaire, the more money he has, the more "conspicuously"—that is, conservatively—he must consume it. If he has £100,000 or more to spend a year his trustees will hardly allow him to "fritter it away" buying what is daring and inexpensive. He must "jealously husband his resources." Then, when the next great Leonardo or Rembrandt or Rodin appears, he can call attention like a demagogue to the national need and like a bureaucrat to his personal parsimony. The double appeal is essential but infallible. With it, but only with it, can he evoke yet more contributions out of the rich and the idealistic and winkle supplementary grants out of the Treasury, the Trusts, and the Foundations.

Such everywhere to-day must be the pattern of collecting in prestigious museums from Los Angeles to Stuttgart. A sense of responsibility to the public, the pressures of public opinion, the use of public funds conspire to impose these reassuring splurges. But there is at least one other possibility. In the past, museums aspiring to a place in the front rank sometimes sought to make a name for themselves by buying the near-fashionable. A foolhardy procedure! The prices, like the institutions, were not at the top, but neither was the scholarship. Ambition and ignorance are the parents of forgery as is proved by those once touted Gothic ivories, Renaissance sculptures, and Etruscan statues which have since been removed from exhibition as discreetly as possible. It is better to be extravagant than sorry.

The pressures on museums and the hazards which encompass them explain why all the boldest American accomplishments in collecting were the achievements of private individuals. It was men like Bigelow, Freer, Hemenway, Bowditch, Barnes, and Bartlett who pioneered in assembling Asian art, Primitive art, and modern French painting. Tax concessions have kept most of the great American collections intact and turned them into public property. Meanwhile, all over Europe their counterparts, the Kann Collection, the Oppenheimer Collection, the Dreytus Collection, a large part of the Wallace Collection and countless others, were being broken up to pay death duties and exported piecemeal across the Atlantic. Both processes go merrily on. While the Pannwitz Collection was recently coming on the market, the Stephen C. Clark Collection was being divided between the Metropolitan and Yale; when the Northwick Collection goes to Christie's later this year, the Newberry Collection will be going to Detroit. "Iniquitous"? Only nations which already have great public collections can afford to be righteous about collecting.

The enthusiastic interest of the wealthy does make it more expensive for museums to buy fashionable paintings. Perhaps keeping-up-with-the-Joneses should be expensive. The "drama" tax concessions can provide sharpens the competition among the most powerful collectors and focuses their attention on one narrow section of the art market. This leaves wider possibilities open to the less rich but more adventuresome, to those men who are willing to devote themselves to the unpopular fields where alone great collections can still be formed.

In the timely exploitation of these fields, collectors living in Britain have been exemplary. Men like the two Richardsons, Lord Lindsay, or Eumorfopoulos led the world. And such creative collecting continues. An American can but reflect with envy that there must be some system which would encourage amateurs like Sir Chester Beatty, Count Seilern, and Denis Mahon, and would ensure that the fruits of their labours remained in Britain. Is there not something more effective than the

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occasional birthday honour? It need cost so little; it could accomplish so much.

"Iniquitous"? That, the much advised Miss Jennie Lee must decide.

JOHN COOLIDGE

Fogg Art Museum
Harvard University
Cambridge, Mass.

I FIND the Fogg Museum Director's letter hard to follow, but I gather that Mr. Coolidge is in favour of the system whereby private individuals are allowed tax concessions in the matter of works of art they buy and donate to museums. Since I am against this system, and in favour of higher grants to museums, I had best state the position as I see it:

1. Either way it is public money that buys the work of art, whether this money is handed on to a museum or back to a rich individual. This is the vital point, and on it Mr. Coolidge seems in agreement with me: though more clearly so in an earlier statement of his.

2. Since the money is public, it seems only right that the spending of it and the supervision of the spending of it should be and should be seen to be in public hands.

3. I say "should be seen to be" for, of course (as Mr. Coolidge admits) even when the control of money apparently passes into private hands, museums are obviously going to try and retain influence over those to whom the right to purchase has been delegated. Hence the proliferation of museum staff in the U.S. concerned with coaxing or cajoling the rich.

4. The only reason for not entrusting the money to public authorities would be if one believed that museum directors were utterly incompetent, in that they could not recognise art until it had first been recognised by someone else. This may be so (Mr. Coolidge suggests it is), but the implications of this are far more sweeping than he seems prepared to accept.

5. A side-effect of the "American system," which can please few people and certainly (I would have thought) not someone with Mr. Coolidge's ideas, is that the more innocuous forms of private collecting (*i.e.* for private purposes) will become virtually the preserve of the few. For prices will tend to rise to around the level constituted by what the rich can afford plus the subsidy they get.

6. Finally, the system stands condemned by its social consequences. A hundred years ago Giovanni Morelli was inspired in his quest for a scientific form of connoisseurship by the thought that the mass of provincial collections of Italy, with their extravagant claims to this or that great master, only reinforced the arrogance and separatism of the different Italian cities. To-day it is hard not to feel that the system of tax concessions for which Mr. Coolidge argues does exactly the same for the arrogance and self-importance of the rich.

It is possible that Mr. Coolidge, like others I know of, agrees with me in thinking the system I advocate is superior, but feels that the one he supports is easier to put over on a democratic electorate. This may be so, but it seems to me no concern of a director of a museum, any more than of a teacher of philosophy, to instruct the state in the wiles of public deception.

RICHARD WOLLHEIM

University College,
London

Printer's Devil

DOES anybody ever notice a silly slip in any piece of writing except (occasionally) the author himself? I just discover that I quote a super-zealous materialist as he explains to his friend [ENCOUNTER, May, p. 88] that the power boat they see with its radiator drained "is *you*, in the state of diabolism. . . ." Though that Unknown Materialist no longer cares, I feel I owe it to his memory to make clear that he meant "the state of *metabolism*."

PAUL IGNOTUS

London

Leo Szilard

READERS OF the memoir of Leo Szilard by Edward Shils [ENCOUNTER, Dec., 1964] will be interested in a previously unpublished document which I have received from Mrs. Szilard. This version of the "Ten Commandments" was not included in *The Voice of the Dolphins* (1961), and has recently been translated from the German by Dr. J. Bronowski, a friend and colleague of Leo Szilard at the Salk Institute in California.

JULIAN HUXLEY

London

Ten Commandments

1. Recognise the connections of things and the laws of conduct of men, so that you may know what you are doing.
2. Let your acts be directed towards a worthy goal, but do not ask if they will reach it; they are to be models and examples, not means to an end.
3. Speak to all men as you do to yourself, with no concern for the effect you make, so that you do not shut them out from your world; lest in isolation the meaning of life slips out of sight and you lose the belief in the perfection of the creation.
4. Do not destroy what you cannot create.
5. Touch no dish, except that you are hungry.
6. Do not covet what you cannot have.
7. Do not lie without need.
8. Honour children. Listen reverently to their words and speak to them with infinite love.
9. Do your work for six years; but in the seventh, go into solitude or among strangers, so that the memory of your friends does not hinder you from being what you have become.
10. Lead your life with a gentle hand and be ready to leave whenever you are called.

LEO SZILARD

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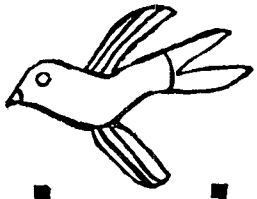
Commonwealth Arts Festival



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AUTHORS

H. J. Eysenck, who is Director of the Psychological Department of the Maudsley Hospital and Professor of Psychology in London University's Institute of Psychiatry, contributed an article on "Are Opinion Polls Adequate?" to the February ENCOUNTER. The subsequent discussion included comments by Dr. Henry Durant of Gallup Poll (March), G. P. Hyett of National Opinion Polls (April), Angus Campbell of the University of Michigan's Survey Research Centre (May), Professor Seymour Martin Lipset (July), and R. L. Leonard (August)....

John Wain's new poem, *Wildtrack*, has recently been published by Macmillan....

François Bondy is the editor of the monthly review, *Preuves*, in Paris....

George Steiner, Fellow of Churchill College, Cambridge, is the author of *Tolstoy or Dostoevsky* (1959) and *The Death of Tragedy* (1961)....

Christopher Sykes' latest book is the recently published *Cross Roads to Israel* (Collins)....

Louis J. Halle is the author of *Men and Nations* (1963) and the forthcoming *The Society of Man* (Chatto & Windus). He is a Professor at the *Institut Universitaire des Hautes Etudes* in Geneva....

The Protestant Establishment by E. Digby Baltzell, reviewed by **Sir Denis Brogan** in the August ENCOUNTER, has just been published in the U.K. by Secker and Warburg (42s.)....

Politics in West Africa by **W. Arthur Lewis** will be published by George Allen & Unwin this autumn. An article, adapted from this work, appeared in our August number....

Cover design by **Colin Banks** and **John Miles.**

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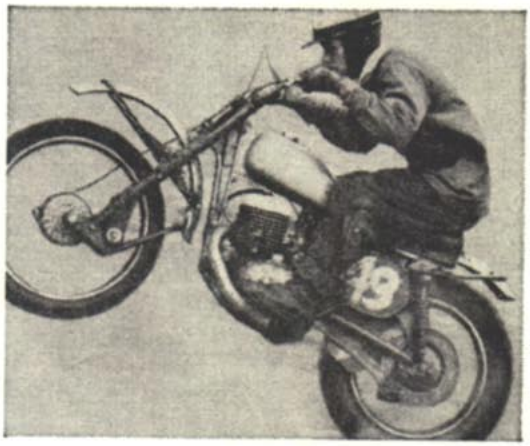

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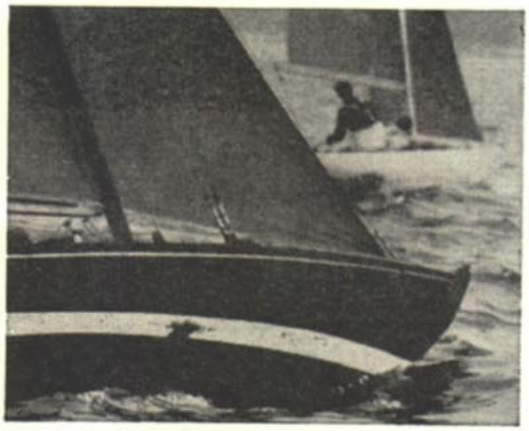

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